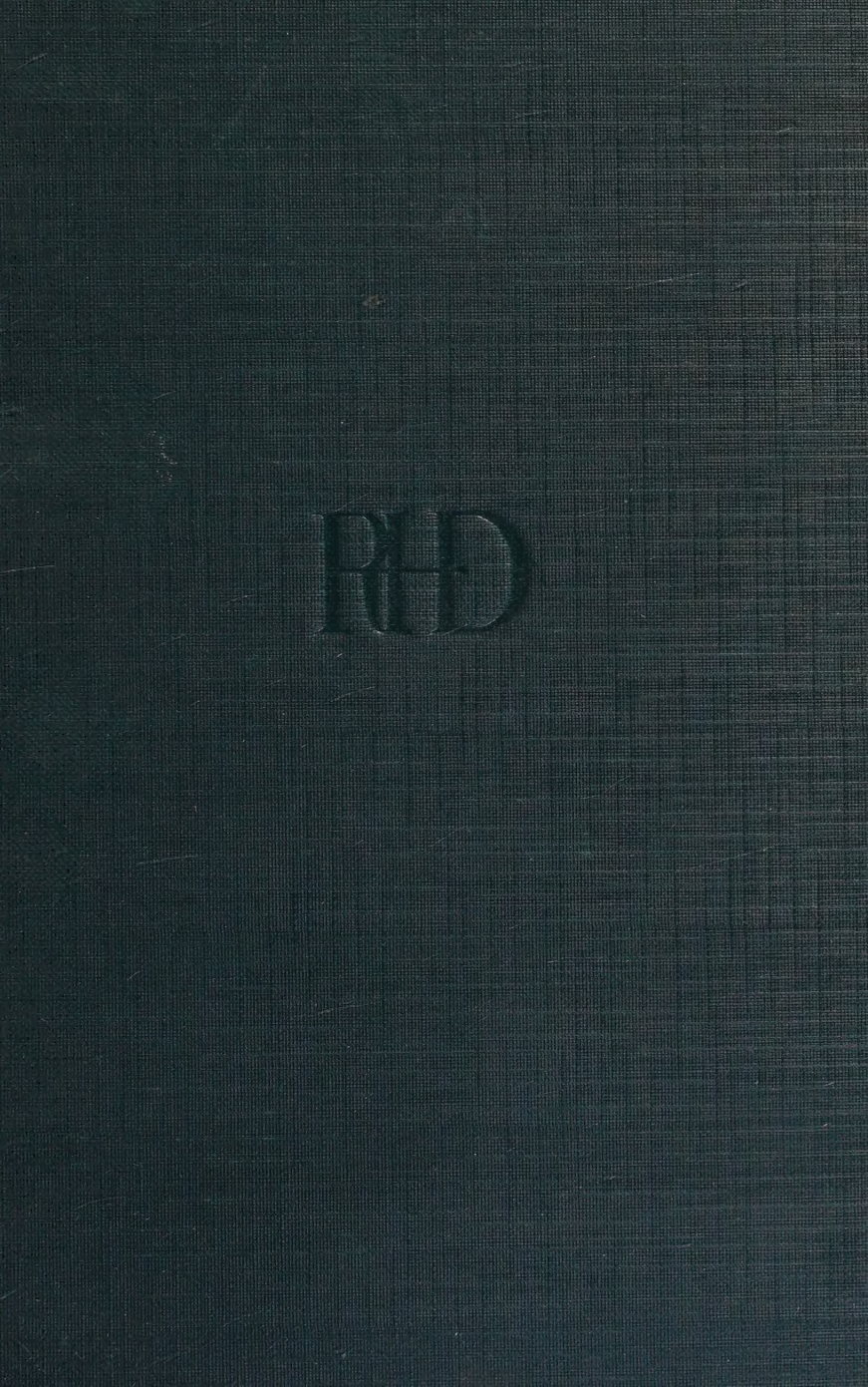
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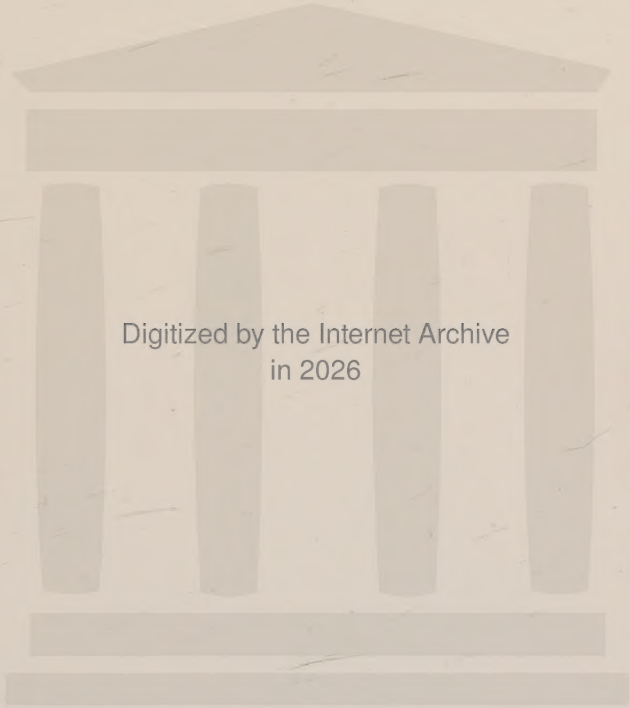
THE EXILES

AND OTHER STORIES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Instead she buried her face in its folds.

THE NOVELS AND STORIES OF
RICHARD HARDING DAVIS

THE EXILES

AND OTHER STORIES

BY

RICHARD HARDING DAVIS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

CHARLES DANA GIBSON

ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1918

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TO

MY FRIEND

J. DAVIS BRODHEAD

THE FIRST GLIMPSE OF DAVIS

Dick was twenty-four years old when he came into the smoking-room of the Victoria Hotel, in London, after midnight one July night—he was dressed as a Thames boatman.

He had been rowing up and down the river since sundown, looking for color. He had evidently peopled every dark corner with a pirate, and every floating object had meant something to him. He had adventure written all over him. It was the first time I had ever seen him, and I had never heard of him. I can't now recall another figure in that smoke-filled room. I don't remember who introduced us—over twenty-seven years have passed since that night. But I can see Dick now dressed in a rough brown suit, a soft hat, with a handkerchief about his neck, a splendid, healthy, clean-minded, gifted boy at play. And so he always remained.

His going out of this world seemed like a boy interrupted in a game he loved. And how well and fairly he played it! Surely no one deserved success more than Dick. And it is a consolation to know he had more than fifty years of just what he wanted.

He had health, a great talent, and personal charm. There never was a more loyal or unselfish friend. There wasn't an atom of envy in him. He had unbounded mental and physical courage, and with it all he was sensitive and sometimes shy. He often tried to conceal these last two qualities, but never succeeded in doing so from those of us who were privileged really to know and love him.

His life was filled with just the sort of adventure he liked the best. No one ever saw more wars in so many different places or got more out of them. And it took the largest war in all history to wear out that stout heart.

We shall miss him.

CHARLES DANA GIBSON.

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THE EXILES

I

THE greatest number of people in the world prefer the most highly civilized places of the world, because they know what sort of things are going to happen there, and because they also know by experience that those are the sort of things they like. A very few people prefer barbarous and utterly uncivilized portions of the globe for the reason that they receive while there new impressions, and because they like the unexpected better than a routine of existence, no matter how pleasant that routine may be. But the most interesting places of all to study are those in which the savage and the cultivated man lie down together and try to live together in unity. This is so because we can learn from such places just how far a man of cultivation lapses into barbarism when he associates with savages, and how far the remnants of his former civilization will have influence upon the barbarians among whom he has come to live.

There are many such colonies as these, and they are the most picturesque plague-spots on

the globe. You will find them in New Zealand and at Yokohama, in Algiers, Tunis, and Tangier, and scattered thickly all along the South American coast-line wherever the law of extradition obtains not, and where public opinion, which is one of the things a colony can do longest without, is unknown. These are the unofficial Botany Bays and Melillas of the world, where the criminal goes of his own accord, and not because his government has urged him to do so and paid his passage there.

This is the story of a young man who went to such a place for the benefit he hoped it would be to his health, and not because he had robbed any one, or done a young girl an injury. He was the only son of Judge Henry Howard Holcombe, of New York. That was all that it was generally considered necessary to say of him. It was not, however, quite enough, for, while his father had had nothing but the right and the good of his State and country to think about, the son was further occupied by trying to live up to his father's name. Young Holcombe was impressed by this fact from his earliest childhood. It rested upon him while at Harvard and during his years at the law school, and it went with him into society and into the courts of law. When he rose to plead a case he did not forget, nor did those present

forget, that his father while alive had crowded those same halls with silent, earnest listeners; and when he addressed a mass-meeting at Cooper Union, or spoke from the back of a cart in the East Side, some one was sure to refer to the fact that this last speaker was the son of the man who was mobbed because he had dared to be an abolitionist, and who later had received the veneration of a great city for his bitter fight against Tweed and his followers.

Young Holcombe was an earnest member of every reform club and citizens' league, and his distinguished name gave weight as a director to charitable organizations and free kindergartens. He had inherited his hatred of Tammany Hall, and was unrelenting in his war upon it and its handiwork, and he spoke of it and of its immediate downfall with the bated breath of one who, though amazed at the wickedness of the thing he fights, is not discouraged nor afraid. And he would listen to no half-measures. Had not his grandfather quarrelled with Henry Clay, and so shaken the friendship of a lifetime, because of a great compromise which he could not countenance? And was his grandson to truckle and make deals with this hideous octopus that was sucking the life-blood from the city's veins? Had he not but yesterday distributed six hundred circulars, calling for honest

government, to six hundred possible voters, all the way up Fourth Avenue?—and when some flippant one had said that he might have hired a messenger-boy to have done it for him and so saved his energies for something less mechanical, he had rebuked the speaker with a reproachful stare and turned away in silence.

Life was terribly earnest to young Holcombe, and he regarded it from the point of view of one who looks down upon it from the judge's bench, and listens with a frown to those who plead its cause. He was not fooled by it; he was alive to its wickedness and its evasions. He would tell you that he knew for a fact that the window man in his district was a cousin of the Tammany candidate, and that the contractor who had the cleaning of the street to do was a brother-in-law of one of the Hall's sachems, and that the policeman on his beat had not been in the country eight months. He spoke of these damning facts with the air of one who simply tells you that much, that you should see how terrible the whole thing really was, and what he could tell if he wished.

In his own profession he recognized the trials of law-breakers only as experiments which went to establish and explain a general principle. And prisoners were not men to him, but merely the exceptions that proved the

excellence of a rule. Holcombe would defend the lowest creature or the most outrageous of murderers, not because the man was a human being fighting for his liberty or life, but because he wished to see if certain evidence would be admitted in the trial of such a case. Of one of his clients the judge, who had a daughter of his own, said, when he sentenced him, "Were there many more such men as you in the world, the women of this land would pray to God to be left childless." And when some one asked Holcombe, with ill-concealed disgust, how he came to defend the man, he replied: "I wished to show the unreliability of expert testimony from medical men. Yes; they tell me the man was a very bad lot."

It was measures, not men, to Holcombe, and law and order were his twin goddesses, and "no compromise" his watchword.

"You can elect your man if you'll give me two thousand dollars to refit our club-room with," one of his political acquaintances once said to him. "We've five hundred voters on the rolls now, and the members vote as one man. You'd be saving the city twenty times that much if you keep Croker's man out of the job. You know *that* as well as I do."

"The city can better afford to lose twenty thousand dollars," Holcombe answered, "than

we can afford to give a two-cent stamp for corruption."

"All right," said the heeler; "all right, Mr. Holcombe. Go on. Fight 'em your own way. If they'd agree to fight you with pamphlets and circulars you'd stand a chance, sir; but as long as they give out money and you give out reading-matter to people that can't read, they'll win, and I naturally want to be on the winning side."

When the club to which Holcombe belonged finally succeeded in getting the Police Commissioners indicted for blackmailing gambling-houses, Holcombe was, as a matter of course and of public congratulation, on the side of the law; and as Assistant District Attorney—a position given him on account of his father's name and in the hope that it would shut his mouth—distinguished himself nobly.

Of the four commissioners, three were convicted—the fourth, Patrick Meakim, with admirable foresight having fled to that country from which few criminals return, and which is vaguely set forth in the newspapers as "parts unknown."

The trial had been a severe one upon the zealous Mr. Holcombe, who found himself at the end of it in a very bad way, with nerves unstrung and brain so fagged that he assented

without question when his doctor exiled him from New York by ordering a sea voyage, with change of environment and rest at the other end of it. Some one else suggested the northern coast of Africa and Tangier, and Holcombe wrote minute directions to the secretaries of all of his reform clubs urging continued efforts on the part of his fellow-workers, and sailed away one cold winter's morning for Gibraltar. The great sea laid its hold upon him, and the winds from the south thawed the cold in his bones, and the sun cheered his tired spirit. He stretched himself at full length reading those books which one puts off reading until illness gives one the right to do so, and so far as in him lay obeyed his doctor's first command, that he should forget New York and all that pertained to it. By the time he had reached the Rock he was up and ready to drift farther into the lazy, irresponsible life of the Mediterranean coast, and he had forgotten his struggles against municipal misrule, and was at times for hours together utterly oblivious of his own personality.

A dumpy, fat little steamer rolled itself along like a sailor on shore from Gibraltar to Tangier, and Holcombe, leaning over the rail of its quarter-deck, smiled down at the chattering group of Arabs and Moors stretched on their

rugs beneath him. A half-naked negro, pulling at the dates in the basket between his bare legs, held up a handful to him with a laugh, and Holcombe laughed back and emptied the cigarettes in his case on top of him, and laughed again as the ship's crew and the deck passengers scrambled over one another and shook out their voluminous robes in search of them. He felt at ease with the world and with himself, and turned his eyes to the white walls of Tangier with a pleasure so complete that it shut out even the thought that it was a pleasure.

The town seemed one continuous mass of white stucco, with each flat, low-lying roof so close to the other that the narrow streets left no trace. To the left of it the yellow coast-line and the green olive-trees and palms stretched up against the sky, and beneath him scores of shrieking blacks fought in their boats for a place beside the steamer's companion-way. He jumped into one of these open wherries and fell sprawling among his baggage, and laughed lightly as a boy as the boatman set him on his feet again, and then threw them from under him with a quick stroke of the oars. The high, narrow pier was crowded with excited customs officers in ragged uniforms and dirty turbans, and with a few foreign residents looking for arriving passengers. Holcombe had

his feet on the upper steps of the ladder, and was ascending slowly. There was a fat, heavily built man in blue serge leaning across the railing of the pier. He was looking down, and as his eyes met Holcombe's face his own straightened into lines of amazement and most evident terror. Holcombe stopped at the sight, and stared back wondering. And then the lapping waters beneath him and the white town at his side faded away, and he was back in the hot, crowded court-room with this man's face before him. Meakim, the fourth of the Police Commissioners, confronted him, and saw in his presence nothing but a menace to himself.

Holcombe came up the last steps of the stairs, and stopped at their top. His instinct and life's tradition made him despise the man, and to this was added the selfish disgust that his holiday should have been so soon robbed of its character by this reminder of all that he had been told to put behind him.

Meakim swept off his hat as though it were hurting him, and showed the great drops of sweat on his forehead.

"For God's sake!" the man panted, "you can't touch me here, Mr. Holcombe. I'm safe here; they told me I'd be. You can't take me. You can't touch me."

Holcombe stared at the man coldly, and with

a touch of pity and contempt. "That is quite right, Mr. Meakim," he said. "The law cannot reach you here."

"Then what do you want with me?" the man demanded, forgetful in his terror of anything but his own safety.

Holcombe turned upon him sharply. "I am not here on your account, Mr. Meakim," he said. "You need not feel the least uneasiness, and," he added, dropping his voice as he noticed that others were drawing near, "if you keep out of my way, I shall certainly keep out of yours."

The Police Commissioner gave a short laugh partly of bravado and partly at his own sudden terror. "I didn't know," he said, breathing with relief. "I thought you'd come after me. You don't wonder you give me a turn, do you? I *was* scared." He fanned himself with his straw hat, and ran his tongue over his lips. "Going to be here some time, Mr. District Attorney?" he added, with grave politeness.

Holcombe could not help but smile at the absurdity of it. It was so like what he would have expected of Meakim and his class to give every office-holder his full title. "No, Mr. Police Commissioner," he answered, grimly, and nodding to his boatmen, pushed his way after them and his trunks along the pier.

Meakim was waiting for him as he left the custom-house. He touched his hat, and bent the whole upper part of his fat body in an awkward bow. "Excuse me, Mr. District Attorney," he began.

"Oh, drop that, will you?" snapped Holcombe. "Now, what is it you want, Meakim?"

"I was only going to say," answered the fugitive, with some offended dignity, "that as I've been here longer than you, I could perhaps give you pointers about the hotels. I've tried 'em all, and they're no good, but the Albion's the best."

"Thank you, I'm sure," said Holcombe. "But I have been told to go to the Isabella."

"Well, that's pretty good, too," Meakim answered, "if you don't mind the tables. They keep you awake most of the night, though, and——"

"The tables? I beg your pardon," said Holcombe, stiffly.

"Not the eatin' tables; the roulette tables," corrected Meakim. "Of course," he continued, grinning, "if you're fond of the game, Mr. Holcombe, it's handy having them in the same house, but I can steer you against a better one back of the French Consulate. Those at the Hotel Isabella's crooked."

Holcombe stopped uncertainly. "I don't

know just what to do," he said. "I think I shall wait until I can see our consul here."

"Oh, he'll send you to the Isabella," said Meakim, cheerfully. "He gets two hundred dollars a week for protecting the proprietor, so he naturally caps for the house."

Holcombe opened his mouth to express himself, but closed it again, and then asked, with some misgivings, of the hotel of which Meakim had first spoken.

"Oh, the Albion. Most all the swells go there. It's English, and they cook you a good beefsteak. And the boys generally drop in for table d'hôte. You see, that's the worst of this place, Mr. Holcombe; there's nowhere to go evenings—no club-rooms nor theatre nor nothing; only the smoking-room of the hotel or that gambling-house; and they spring a double naught on you if there's more than a dollar up."

Holcombe still stood irresolute, his porters eying him from under their burdens, and the runners from the different hotels plucking at his sleeve.

"There's some very good people at the Albion," urged the Police Commissioner, "and three or four of 'em's New-Yorkers. There's the Morrises and Ropes, the Consul-General, and Lloyd Carroll——"

"Lloyd Carroll!" exclaimed Holcombe.

"Yes," said Meakim, with a smile, "he's here." He looked at Holcombe curiously for a moment, and then exclaimed, with a laugh of intelligence, "Why, sure enough, you were Mr. Thatcher's lawyer in that case, weren't you? It was you got him his divorce?"

Holcombe nodded.

"Carroll was the man that made it possible, wasn't he?"

Holcombe chafed under this catechism. "He was one of a dozen, I believe," he said; but as he moved away he turned and asked: "And Mrs. Thatcher. What has become of her?"

The Police Commissioner did not answer at once, but glanced up at Holcombe from under his half-shut eyes with a look in which there was a mixture of curiosity and of amusement. "You don't mean to say, Mr. Holcombe," he began, slowly, with the patronage of the older man and with a touch of remonstrance in his tone, "that you're *still* with the husband in that case?"

Holcombe looked coldly over Mr. Meakim's head. "I have only a purely professional interest in any one of them," he said. "They struck me as a particularly nasty lot. Good-morning, sir."

"Well," Meakim called after him, "you

needn't see nothing of them if you don't want to. You can get rooms to yourself."

Holcombe did get rooms to himself, with a balcony overlooking the bay, and arranged with the proprietor of the Albion to have his dinner served at a separate table. As others had done this before, no one regarded it as an affront upon his society, and several people in the hotel made advances to him, which he received politely but coldly. For the first week of his visit the town interested him greatly, increasing its hold upon him unconsciously to himself. He was restless and curious to see it all, and rushed his guide from one of the few show-places to the next with an energy which left that fat Oriental panting.

But after three days Holcombe climbed the streets more leisurely, stopping for half-hours at a time before a bazaar, or sent away his guide altogether, and stretched himself luxuriously on the broad wall of the fortifications. The sun beat down upon him, and wrapped him into drowsiness. From far afield came the unceasing murmur of the market-place and the bazaars, and the occasional cries of the priests from the minarets; the dark blue sea danced and flashed beyond the white margin of the town and its protecting reef of rocks where the sea-weed rose and fell, and above his head the buzzards swept

Stopping for half-hours at a time before a bazaar.

heavily, and called to one another with harsh, frightened cries. At his side lay the dusty road, hemmed in by walls of cactus, and along its narrow length came lines of patient little donkeys with jangling necklaces, led by wild-looking men from the farm-lands and the desert, and women muffled and shapeless, with only their bare feet showing, who looked at him curiously or meaningly from over the protecting cloth, and passed on, leaving him startled and wondering. He began to find that the books he had brought wearied him. The sight of the type alone was enough to make him close the covers and start up restlessly to look for something less absorbing. He found this on every hand, in the lazy patience of the bazaars and of the markets, where the chief service of all was that of only standing and waiting, and in the farm-lands behind Tangier, where half-naked slaves drove great horned buffalo, and turned back the soft, chocolate-colored sod with a wooden plough. But it was a solitary, selfish holiday, and Holcombe found himself wanting certain ones at home to bear him company, and was surprised to find that of these none were the men nor the women with whom his interests in the city of New York were the most closely connected. They were rather foolish people, men at whom he had laughed

and whom he had rather pitied for having made him do so, and women he had looked at distantly as of a kind he might understand when his work was over and he wished to be amused. The young girls to whom he was in the habit of pouring out his denunciations of evil, and from whom he was accustomed to receive advice and moral support, he could not place in this landscape. He felt uneasily that they would not allow him to enjoy it his own way; they would consider the Moor historically as the invader of Catholic Europe, and would be shocked at the lack of proper sanitation, and would see the mud. As for himself, he had risen above seeing the mud. He looked up now at the broken line of the roof-tops against the blue sky, and when a hooded figure drew back from his glance he found himself murmuring the words of an Eastern song he had read in a book of Indian stories:

"Alone upon the house-tops, to the north
I turn and watch the lightning in the sky,—
The glamour of thy footsteps in the north.
Come back to me, Beloved, or I die!

"Below my feet the still bazaar is laid.
Far, far below, the weary camels lie——"

Holcombe laughed and shrugged his shoulders. He had stopped half-way down the hill on which

stands the Bashaw's palace, and the whole of Tangier lay below him like a great cemetery of white marble. The moon was shining clearly over the town and the sea, and a soft wind from the sandy farm-lands came to him and played about him like the fragrance of a garden. Something moved in him that he did not recognize, but which was strangely pleasant, and which ran to his brain like the taste of a strong liqueur. It came to him that he was alone among strangers, and that what he did now would be known but to himself and to these strangers. What it was that he wished to do he did not know, but he felt a sudden lifting up and freedom from restraint. The spirit of adventure awoke in him and tugged at his sleeve, and he was conscious of a desire to gratify it and put it to the test.

"'Alone upon the house-tops,'" he began. Then he laughed and clambered hurriedly down the steep hill-side. "It's the moonlight," he explained to the blank walls and overhanging lattices, "and the place and the music of the song. It might be one of the Arabian nights, and I Haroun al Raschid. *And* if I don't get back to the hotel I shall make a fool of myself."

He reached the Albion very warm and breathless, with stumbling and groping in the dark, and instead of going immediately to bed told

the waiter to bring him some cool drink out on the terrace of the smoking-room. There were two men sitting there in the moonlight, and as he came forward one of them nodded to him silently.

"Oh, good-evening, Mr. Meakim!" Holcombe said, gayly, with the spirit of the night still upon him. "I've been having adventures." He laughed, and stooped to brush the dirt from his knickerbockers and stockings. "I went up to the palace to see the town by moonlight, and tried to find my way back alone, and fell down three times."

Meakim shook his head gravely. "You'd better be careful at night, sir," he said. "The governor has just said that the Sultan won't be responsible for the lives of foreigners at night 'unless accompanied by soldier and lantern.'"

"Yes, and the legations sent word that they wouldn't have it," broke in the other man. "They said they'd hold him responsible anyway."

There was a silence, and Meakim moved in some slight uneasiness. "Mr. Holcombe, do you know Mr. Carroll?" he said.

Carroll half rose from his chair, but Holcombe was dragging another toward him, and so did not have a hand to give him.

"How are you, Carroll?" he said, pleasantly.

The night was warm, and Holcombe was tired after his rambles, and so he sank back in the low wicker chair contentedly enough, and when the first cool drink was finished he clapped his hands for another, and then another, while the two men sat at the table beside him and avoided such topics as would be unfair to any of them.

"And yet," said Holcombe, after the first half-hour had passed, "there must be a few agreeable people here. I am sure I saw some very nice-looking women to-day coming in from the fox-hunt. And very well gotten up, too, in Karki habits. And the men were handsome, decent-looking chaps—Englishmen, I think."

"Who does he mean? Were you at the meet to-day?" asked Carroll.

The Tammany chieftain said no, that he did not ride—not after foxes, in any event. "But I saw Mrs. Hornby and her sister coming back," he said. "They had on those linen habits."

"Well, now, there's a woman who illustrates just what I have been saying," continued Carroll. "You picked her out as a self-respecting, nice-looking girl—and so she is—but she wouldn't like to have to tell all she knows. No, they are all pretty much alike. They wear low-neck frocks, and the men put on evening dress for dinner, and they ride after foxes, and they drop in to five-o'clock tea, and

they all play that they're a lot of gilded saints, and it's one of the rules of the game that you must believe in the next man, so that he will believe in you. I'm breaking the rules myself now, because I say 'they' when I ought to say 'we.' We're none of us here for our health, Holcombe, but it pleases us to pretend we are. It's a sort of give and take. We all sit around at dinner-parties and smile and chatter, and those English talk about the latest news from 'town,' and how they mean to run back for the season or the hunting. But they know they don't dare go back, and they know that everybody at the table knows it, and that the servants behind them know it. But it's more easy that way. There's only a few of us here, and we've got to hang together or we'd go crazy."

"That's so," said Meakim, approvingly. "It makes it more sociable."

"It's a funny place," continued Carroll. The wine had loosened his tongue, and it was something to him to be able to talk to one of his own people again, and to speak from their point of view, so that the man who had gone through St. Paul's and Harvard with him would see it as such a man should. "It's a funny place, because, in spite of the fact that it's a prison, you grow to like it for its freedom.

You can do things here you can't do in New York, and pretty much everything goes there, or it used to, where I hung out. But here you're just your own master, and there's no law and no religion and no relations nor newspapers to poke into what you do nor how you live. You can understand what I mean if you've ever tried living in the West. I used to feel the same way the year I was ranching in Texas. My family sent me out there to put me out of temptation; but I concluded I'd rather drink myself to death on good whiskey at Del's than on the stuff we got on the range, so I pulled my freight and came East again. But while I was there I was a little king. I was just as good as the next man, and he was no better than me. And though the life was rough, and it was cold and lonely, there was something in being your own boss that made you stick it out there longer than anything else did. It was like this, Holcombe." Carroll half rose from his chair and marked what he said with his finger. "Every time I took a step and my gun bumped against my hip, I'd straighten up and feel good and look for trouble. There was nobody to appeal to; it was just between me and him, and no one else had any say about it. Well, that's what it's like here. You see men come to Tangier on the run,

flying from detectives or husbands or bank directors, men who have lived perfectly decent, commonplace lives up to the time they made their one bad break—which," Carroll added, in polite parenthesis, with a deprecatory wave of his hand toward Meakim and himself, "we are *all* likely to do some time, aren't we?"

"Just so," said Meakim.

"Of course," assented the District Attorney.

"But as soon as he reaches this place, Holcombe," continued Carroll, "he begins to show just how bad he is. It all comes out—all his viciousness and rottenness and blackguardism. There is nothing to shame it, and there is no one to blame him, and no one is in a position to throw the first stone." Carroll dropped his voice and pulled his chair forward with a glance over his shoulder. "One of those men you saw riding in from the meet to-day. Now, he's a German officer, and he's here for forging a note or cheating at cards or something quiet and gentlemanly, nothing that shows him to be a brute or a beast. But last week he had old Mulley Wazzam buy him a slave girl in Fez, and bring her out to his house in the suburbs. It seems that the girl was in love with a soldier in the Sultan's body-guard at Fez, and tried to run away to join him, and this man met her quite by accident as she was making her way

south across the sand-hills. He was whip that day, and was hurrying out to the meet alone. He had some words with the girl first, and then took his whip—it was one of those with the long lash to it; you know what I mean—and cut her to pieces with it, riding her down on his pony when she tried to run, and heading her off and lashing her around the legs and body until she fell; then he rode on in his damn pink coat to join the ladies at Mango's Drift, where the meet was, and some Riffs found her bleeding to death behind the sand-hills. That man held a commission in the Emperor's own body-guard, and that's what Tangier did for *him*."

Holcombe glanced at Meakim to see if he would verify this, but Meakim's lips were tightly pressed around his cigar, and his eyes were half closed.

"And what was done about it?" Holcombe asked, hoarsely.

Carroll laughed, and shrugged his shoulders. "Why, I tell you, and you whisper it to the next man, and we pretend not to believe it, and call the Riffs liars. As I say, we're none of us here for our health, Holcombe, and a public opinion that's manufactured by *déclassée* women and men who have run off with somebody's money and somebody's else's wife isn't strong enough to try a man for beating his own slave."

"But the Moors themselves?" protested Holcombe. "And the Sultan? She's one of his subjects, isn't she?"

"She's a woman, and women don't count for much in the East, you know; and as for the Sultan, he's an ignorant black savage. When the English wanted to blow up those rocks off the western coast, the Sultan wouldn't let them. He said Allah had placed them there for some good reason of His own, and it was not for man to interfere with the works of God. That's the sort of a Sultan he is." Carroll rose suddenly and walked into the smoking-room, leaving the two men looking at each other in silence.

"That's right," said Meakim, after a pause. "He give it to you just as it is, but I never knew him to kick about it before. We're a fair field for missionary work, Mr. Holcombe, all of us—at least, some of us are." He glanced up as Carroll came back from out of the lighted room with an alert, brisk step. His manner had changed in his absence.

"Some of the ladies have come over for a bit of supper," he said. "Mrs. Hornby and her sister and Captain Reese. The *chef's* got some birds for us, and I've put a couple of bottles on ice. It will be like Del's—hey? A small hot bird and a large cold bottle. They sent me out to ask you to join us. They're in our rooms."

Meakim rose leisurely and lit a fresh cigar, but Holcombe moved uneasily in his chair. "You'll come, won't you?" Carroll asked. "I'd like you to meet my wife."

Holcombe rose irresolutely and looked at his watch. "I'm afraid it's too late for me," he said, without raising his face. "You see, I'm here for my health. I——"

"I beg your pardon," said Carroll, sharply.

"Nonsense, Carroll!" said Holcombe. "I didn't mean *that*. I meant it literally. I can't risk midnight suppers yet. My doctor's orders are to go to bed at nine, and it's past twelve now. Some other time, if you'll be so good; but it's long after my bedtime, and——"

"Oh, certainly," said Carroll, quietly, as he turned away. "Are you coming, Meakim?"

Meakim lifted his half-empty glass from the table and tasted it slowly until Carroll had left them, then he put the glass down, and glanced aside to where Holcombe sat looking out over the silent city. Holcombe raised his eyes and stared at him steadily.

"Mr. Holcombe—" the fugitive began.

"Yes," replied the lawyer.

Meakim shook his head. "Nothing," he said. "Good-night, sir."

Holcombe's rooms were on the floor above Carroll's, and the laughter of the latter's guests

and the tinkling of glasses and silver came to him as he stepped out upon his balcony. But for this the night was very still. The sea beat leisurely on the rocks, and the waves ran up the sandy coast with a sound as of some one sweeping. The music of women's laughter came up to him suddenly, and he wondered hotly if they were laughing at him. He assured himself that it was a matter of indifference to him if they were. And with this he had a wish that they would not think of him as holding himself aloof. One of the women began to sing to a guitar, and to the accompaniment of this a man and a young girl came out upon the balcony below, and spoke to each other in low, earnest tones, which seemed to carry with them the feeling of a caress. Holcombe could not hear what they said, but he could see the curve of the woman's white shoulders and the light of her companion's cigar as he leaned upon the rail with his back to the moonlight and looked into her face. Holcombe felt a sudden touch of loneliness and of being very far from home. He shivered slightly as though from the cold, and stepping inside closed the window gently behind him.

Although Holcombe met Carroll several times during the following day, the latter obviously avoided him, and it was not until late in the

afternoon that Holcombe was given a chance to speak to him again. Carroll was coming down the only street on a run, jumping from one rough stone to another, and with his face lighted up with excitement. He hailed Holcombe from a distance with a wave of the hand. "There's an American man-of-war in the bay," he cried; "one of the new ones. We saw her flag from the hotel. Come on!" Holcombe followed as a matter of course, as Carroll evidently expected that he would, and they reached the end of the landing-pier together, just as the ship of war ran up and broke the square red flag of Morocco from her main-mast and fired her salute.

"They'll be sending a boat in by-and-by," said Carroll, "and we'll have a talk with the men." His enthusiasm touched his companion also, and the sight of the floating atom of the great country that was his moved him strongly, as though it were a personal message from home. It came to him like the familiar stamp, and a familiar handwriting on a letter in a far-away land, and made him feel how dear his own country was to him and how much he needed it. They were leaning side by side upon the rail watching the ship's screws turning the blue waters white, and the men running about the deck, and the blue-coated figures on the

bridge. Holcombe turned to point out the vessel's name to Carroll, and found that his companion's eyes were half closed and filled with tears.

Carroll laughed consciously and coughed. "We kept it up a bit too late last night," he said, "and I'm feeling nervous this morning, and the sight of the flag and those boys from home knocked me out." He paused for a moment, frowning through his tears and with his brow drawn up into many wrinkles. "It's a terrible thing, Holcombe," he began again, fiercely, "to be shut off from all of that." He threw out his hand with a sudden gesture toward the man-of-war. Holcombe looked down at the water and laid his hand lightly on his companion's shoulder. Carroll drew away and shook his head. "I don't want any sympathy," he said, kindly. "I'm not crying the baby act. But you don't know, and I don't believe anybody else knows, what I've gone through and what I've suffered. You don't like me, Holcombe, and you don't like my class, but I want to tell you something about my coming here. I want you to set them right about it at home. And I don't care whether it interests you or not," he said, with quick offense; "I want you to listen. It's about my wife."

Holcombe bowed his head gravely.

"You got Thatcher his divorce," Carroll continued. "And you know that he would never have got it but for me, and that everybody expected that I would marry Mrs. Thatcher when the thing was over. And I didn't, and everybody said I was a blackguard, and I was. It was bad enough before, but I made it worse by not doing the only thing that could make it any better. Why I didn't do it I don't know. I had some grand ideas of reform about that time, I think, and I thought I owed my people something, and that by not making Mrs. Thatcher my mother's daughter I would be saving her and my sisters. It was remorse, I guess, and I didn't see things straight. I know now what I should have done. Well, I left her and she went her own way, and a great many people felt sorry for her, and were good to her —not your people, nor my people; but enough were good to her to make her see as much of the world as she had used to. She never loved Thatcher, and she never loved any of the men you brought into that trial except one, and he treated her like a cur. That was myself. Well, what with trying to please my family, and loving Alice Thatcher all the time and not seeing her, and hating her too for bringing me into all that notoriety—for I blamed the woman,

of course, as a man always will—I got to drinking, and then this scrape came and I had to run. I don't care anything about that row now, or what you believe about it. I'm here, shut off from my home, and that's a worse punishment than any damn lawyers can invent. And the man's well again. He saw I was drunk; but I wasn't so drunk that I didn't know he was trying to do me, and I pounded him just as they say I did, and I'm sorry now I didn't kill him."

Holcombe stirred uneasily, and the man at his side lowered his voice and went on more calmly:

"If I hadn't been a gentleman, Holcombe, or if it had been another cabman he'd fought with, there wouldn't have been any trouble about it. But he thought he could get big money out of me, and his friends told him to press it until he was paid to pull out, and I hadn't the money, and so I had to break bail and run. Well, you've seen the place. You've been here long enough to know what it's like, and what I've had to go through. Nobody wrote me, and nobody came to see me; not one of my own sisters even, though they've been in the Riviera all this spring—not a day's journey away. Sometimes a man turned up that I knew, but it was almost worse than not seeing any one. It only made me more homesick when he'd

gone. And for weeks I used to walk up and down that beach there alone late in the night, until I got to thinking that the waves were talking to me, and I got queer in my head. I had to fight it just as I used to have to fight against whiskey, and to talk fast so that I wouldn't think. And I tried to kill myself hunting, and only got a broken collar-bone for my pains. Well, all this time Alice was living in Paris and New York. I heard that some English captain was going to marry her, and then I read in the Paris *Herald* that she was settled in the American colony there, and one day it gave a list of the people who'd been to a reception she gave. She could go where she pleased, and she had money in her own right, you know; and she was being revenged on me every day. And I was here knowing it, and loving her worse than I ever loved anything on earth, and having lost the right to tell her so, and not able to go to her. Then one day some chap turned up from here and told her about me, and about how miserable I was, and how well I was being punished. He thought it would please her, I suppose. I don't know who he was, but I guess he was in love with her himself. And then the papers had it that I was down with the fever here, and she read about it. I *was* ill for a time, and I hoped it was going to

carry me off decently, but I got up in a week or two, and one day I crawled down here where we're standing now to watch the boat come in. I was pretty weak from my illness, and I was bluer than I had ever been, and I didn't see anything but blackness and bitterness for me anywhere. I turned around when the passengers reached the pier, and I saw a woman coming up those stairs. Her figure and her shoulders were so like Alice's that my heart went right up into my throat, and I couldn't breathe for it. I just stood still staring, and when she reached the top of the steps she looked up, breathing with the climb, and laughing; and she says, 'Lloyd, I've come to see you.' And I—I was that lonely and weak that I grabbed her hand, and leaned back against the railing, and cried there before the whole of them. I don't think she expected it exactly, because she didn't know what to do, and just patted me on the shoulder, and said, 'I thought I'd run down to cheer you up a bit; and I've brought Mrs. Scott with me to chaperon us.' And I said, without stopping to think: 'You wouldn't have needed any chaperon, Alice, if I hadn't been a cur and a fool. If I had only asked what I can't ask of you now'; and, Holcombe, she flushed just like a little girl, and laughed, and said, 'Oh, will you, Lloyd?' And

you see that ugly iron chapel up there, with the corrugated zinc roof and the wooden cross on it, next to the mosque? Well, that's where we went first, right from this wharf before I let her go to a hotel, and old Ridley, the English rector, he married us, and we had a civil marriage too. That's what she did for me. She had the whole wide globe to live in, and she gave it up to come to Tangier, because I had no other place but Tangier, and she's made my life for me, and I'm happier here than I ever was before anywhere, and sometimes I think—I hope—that she is, too." Carroll's lips moved slightly, and his hands trembled on the rail. He coughed, and his voice was gentler when he spoke again. "And so," he added, "that's why I felt it last night when you refused to meet her. You were right, I know, from your way of thinking, but we've grown careless down here, and we look at things differently."

Holcombe did not speak, but put his arm across the other's shoulder, and this time Carroll did not shake it off. Holcombe pointed with his hand to a tall, handsome woman with heavy yellow hair who was coming toward them, with her hands in the pockets of her reefer. "There is Mrs. Carroll now," he said. "Won't you present me, and then we can row out and see the man-of-war?"

II

The officers returned their visit during the day, and the American Consul-General asked them all to a reception the following afternoon. The entire colony came to this, and Holcombe met many people, and drank tea with several ladies in riding-habits, and iced drinks with all of the men. He found it very amusing, and the situation appealed strongly to his somewhat latent sense of humor. That evening in writing to his sister he told of his rapid recovery in health, and of the possibility of his returning to civilization.

"There was a reception this afternoon at the Consul-General's," he wrote, "given to the officers of our man-of-war, and I found myself in some rather remarkable company. The Consul himself has become rich by selling his protection for two hundred dollars to every wealthy Moor who wishes to escape the forced loans which the Sultan is in the habit of imposing on the faithful. For five hundred dollars he will furnish any one of them with a piece of stamped paper accrediting him as minister plenipotentiary from the United States to the Sultan's court. Of

course the Sultan never receives them, and whatever object they may have had in taking the long journey to Fez is never accomplished. Some day some one of them will find out how he has been tricked, and will return to have the Consul assassinated. This will be a serious loss to our diplomatic service. The Consul's wife is a fat German woman who formerly kept a hotel here. Her brother has it now, and runs it as an annex to a gambling-house. Pat Meakim, the Police Commissioner that I indicted, but who jumped his bail, introduced me at the reception to the men, with apparently great self-satisfaction, as 'the pride of the New York Bar,' and Mrs. Carroll, for whose husband I obtained a divorce, showed her gratitude by presenting me to the ladies. It was a distinctly Gilbertian situation, and the people to whom they introduced me were quite as picturesquely disreputable as themselves. So you see——"

Holcombe stopped here and read over what he had written, and then tore up the letter. The one he sent in its place said he was getting better, but that the climate was not so mild as he had expected it would be.

Holcombe engaged the entire first floor of the hotel the next day, and entertained the officers and the residents at breakfast, and the

Admiral made a speech and said how grateful it was to him and to his officers to find that wherever they might touch, there were some few Americans ready to welcome them as the representatives of the flag they all so unselfishly loved, and of the land they still so proudly called "home." Carroll, turning his wine-glass slowly between his fingers, raised his eyes to catch Holcombe's, and winked at him from behind the curtain of the smoke of his cigar, and Holcombe smiled grimly, and winked back, with the result that Meakim, who had intercepted the signalling, choked on his champagne, and had to be pounded violently on the back. Holcombe's breakfast established him as a man of means and one who could entertain properly, and after that his society was counted upon for every hour of the day. He offered money as prizes for the ship's crew to row and swim after, he gave a purse for a cross-country pony race, open to members of the Calpe and Tangier hunts, and organized picnics and riding parties innumerable. He was forced at last to hire a soldier to drive away the beggars when he walked abroad. He found it easy to be rich in a place where he was given over two hundred copper coins for an English shilling, and he distributed his largesses recklessly and with a lack of discrimination entirely opposed to

the precepts of his organized charities at home. He found it so much more amusing to throw a handful of coppers to a crowd of fat naked children than to write a check for the Society for Suppression of Cruelty to the same beneficiaries.

"You shouldn't give those fellows money," the Consul-General once remonstrated with him; "the fact that they're blind is only a proof that they have been thieves. When they catch a man stealing here they hold his head back, and pass a hot iron in front of his eyes. That's why the lids are drawn taut that way. You shouldn't encourage them."

"Perhaps they're not *all* thieves," said the District Attorney, cheerfully, as he hit the circle around him with a handful of coppers; "but there is no doubt about it that they're all blind. Which is the more to be pitied," he asked the Consul-General, "the man who has still to be found out and who can see, or the one who has been exposed and who is blind?"

"How should he know?" said Carroll, laughing. "He's never been blind, and he still holds his job."

"I don't think that's very funny," said the Consul-General.

A week of pig-sticking came to end Holcombe's stay in Tangier, and he threw himself

into it and into the freedom of its life with a zest that made even the Englishman speak of him as a good fellow. He chanced to overhear this, and stopped to consider what it meant. No one had ever called him a good fellow at home, but then his life had not offered him the chance to show what sort of a good fellow he might be, and as Judge Holcombe's son certain things had been debarred him. Here he was only the richest tourist since Farwell, the diamond smuggler from Amsterdam, had touched there in his yacht.

The week of boar-hunting was spent out-of-doors, on horseback, and in tents; the women in two wide circular ones, and the men in another, with a mess tent, which they shared in common, pitched between them. They had only one change of clothes each, one wet and one dry, and they were in the saddle from nine in the morning until late at night, when they gathered in a wide circle around the wood-fire and played banjoes and listened to stories. Holcombe grew as red as a sailor, and jumped his horse over gaping crevasses in the hard sun-baked earth as recklessly as though there were nothing in this world so well worth sacrificing one's life for as to be the first in at a dumb brute's death. He was on friendly terms with them all now—with Miss Terrill, the young girl

The boar hunt.

who had been awakened by night and told to leave Monte Carlo before daybreak, and with Mrs. Darhah, who would answer to Lady Taunton if so addressed, and with Andrews, the Scotch bank clerk, and Ollid the boy officer from Gibraltar, who had found some difficulty in making the mess account balance. They were all his very good friends, and he was especially courteous and attentive to Miss Terrill's wants and interests, and fixed her stirrup and once let her pass him to charge the boar in his place. She was a silently distant young woman, and strangely gentle for one who had had to leave a place, and such a place, between days; and her hair, which was very fine and light, ran away from under her white helmet in disconnected curls. At night, Holcombe used to watch her from out of the shadow when the firelight lit up the circle and the tips of the palms above them, and when the story-teller's voice was accompanied by bursts of occasional laughter from the dragomen in the grove beyond, and the stamping and neighing of the horses at their pickets, and the unceasing chorus of the insect life about them. She used to sit on one of the rugs with her hands clasped about her knees, and with her head resting on Mrs. Hornby's broad shoulder, looking down into the embers of the fire, and with the story of

her life written on her girl's face as irrevocably as though old age had set its seal there. Holcombe was kind to them all now, even to Meakim, when that gentleman rode leisurely out to the camp with the mail and the latest Paris *Herald*, which was their one bond of union with the great outside world.

Carroll sat smoking his pipe one night, and bending forward over the fire to get its light on the pages of the latest copy of this paper. Suddenly he dropped it between his knees. "I say, Holcombe," he cried, "here's news! Winthrop Allen has absconded with three hundred thousand dollars, and no one knows where."

Holcombe was sitting on the other side of the fire, prying at the rowel of his spur with a hunting-knife. He raised his head and laughed. "Another good man gone wrong, hey?" he said.

Carroll lowered the paper slowly to his knee and stared curiously through the smoky light to where Holcombe sat intent on the rowel of his spur. It apparently absorbed his entire attention, and his last remark had been an unconsciously natural one. Carroll smiled grimly as he folded the paper across his knee. "Now are the mighty fallen, indeed," he murmured. He told Meakim of it a few minutes later, and they both marvelled. "It's just as I told him, isn't it, and he wouldn't believe me. It's the

place and the people. Two weeks ago he would have raged. Why, Meakim, you know Allen —Winthrop Allen? He's one of Holcombe's own sort; older than he is, but one of his own people; belongs to the same clubs; and to the same family, I think, and yet Harry took it just as a matter of course, with no more interest than if I'd said that Allen was going to be married."

Meakim gave a low, comfortable laugh of content. "It makes me smile," he chuckled, "every time I think of him the day he came up them stairs. He scared me half to death, he did, and then he says, just as stiff as you please, 'If you'll leave me alone, Mr. Meakim, I'll not trouble you.' And now it's 'Meakim this,' and 'Meakim that,' and 'have a drink, Meakim,' just as thick as thieves. I have to laugh whenever I think of it now. 'If you'll leave me alone, I'll not trouble you, Mr. Meakim.'"

Carroll pursed his lips and looked up at the broad expanse of purple heavens with the white stars shining through. "It's rather a pity, too, in a way," he said, slowly. "He was all the Public Opinion we had, and now that he's thrown up the part, why——"

The pig-sticking came to an end finally, and Holcombe distinguished himself by taking his first fall, and under romantic circumstances.

He was in an open place, with Mrs. Carroll at the edge of the brush to his right, and Miss Terrill guarding any approach from the left. They were too far apart to speak to one another, and sat quite still and alert to any noise as the beaters closed in around them. There was a sharp rustle in the reeds, and the boar broke out of it some hundred feet ahead of Holcombe. He went after it at a gallop, headed it off, and ran it fairly on his spear point as it came toward him; but as he drew his lance clear his horse came down, falling across him, and for the instant knocking him breathless. It was all over in a moment. He raised his head to see the boar turn and charge him; he saw where his spear point had torn the lower lip from the long tusks, and that the blood was pouring down its flank. He tried to draw out his legs, but the pony lay fairly across him, kicking and struggling, and held him in a vise. So he closed his eyes and covered his head with his arms, and crouched in a heap waiting. There was the quick beat of a pony's hoofs on the hard soil, and the rush of the boar within a foot of his head, and when he looked up he saw Miss Terrill twisting her pony's head around to charge the boar again, and heard her shout, "Let me have him!" to Mrs. Carroll.

Mrs. Carroll came toward Holcombe with

her spear pointed dangerously high; she stopped at his side and drew in her rein sharply. "Why don't you get up? Are you hurt?" she said. "Wait; lie still," she commanded, "or he'll tramp on you. I'll get him off." She slipped from her saddle and dragged Holcombe's pony to his feet. Holcombe stood up unsteadily, pale through his tan from the pain of the fall and the moment of fear.

"That *was* nasty," said Mrs. Carroll, with a quick breath. She was quite as pale as he.

Holcombe wiped the dirt from his hair and the side of his face, and looked past her to where Miss Terrill was surveying the dead boar from her saddle, while her pony reared and shied, quivering with excitement beneath her. Holcombe mounted stiffly and rode toward her. "I am very much obliged to you," he said. "If you hadn't come—"

The girl laughed shortly, and shook her head without looking at him. "Why, not at all," she interrupted, quickly. "I would have come just as fast if you hadn't been there." She turned in her saddle and looked at him frankly. "I was glad to see you go down," she said, "for it gave me the first good chance I've had. Are you hurt?"

Holcombe drew himself up stiffly, regardless of the pain in his neck and shoulder. "No,

I'm all right, thank you," he answered. "At the same time," he called after her as she moved away to meet the others, "you *did* save me from being torn up, whether you like it or not."

Mrs. Carroll was looking after the girl with observant, comprehending eyes. She turned to Holcombe with a smile. "There are a few things you have still to learn, Mr. Holcombe," she said, bowing in her saddle mockingly, and dropping the point of her spear to him as an adversary does in salute. "And perhaps," she added, "it is just as well that there are."

Holcombe trotted after her in some concern. "I wonder what she means?" he said. "I wonder if I were rude?"

The pig-sticking ended with a long luncheon before the ride back to town, at which everything that could be eaten or drunk was put on the table, in order, as Meakim explained, that there would be less to carry back. He met Holcombe that same evening after the cavalcade had reached Tangier as the latter came down the stairs of the Albion. Holcombe was in fresh raiment and cleanly shaven, and with the radiant air of one who had had his first comfortable bath in a week.

Meakim confronted him with a smiling countenance. "Who do you think come to-night on the mail-boat?" he asked.

"I don't know. Who?"

"Winthrop Allen, with six trunks," said Meakim, with the triumphant air of one who brings important news.

"No, really now," said Holcombe, laughing. "The old hypocrite! I wonder what he'll say when he sees me. I wish I could stay over another boat, just to remind him of the last time we met. What a fraud he is! It was at the club, and he was congratulating me on my noble efforts in the cause of justice, and all that sort of thing. He said I was a public benefactor. And at that time he must have already speculated away about half of what he had stolen of other people's money. I'd like to tease him about it."

"What trial was that?" asked Meakim.

Holcombe laughed and shook his head as he moved on down the stairs. "Don't ask embarrassing questions, Meakim," he said. "It was one *you* won't forget in a hurry."

"Oh!" said Meakim, with a grin. "All right. There's some mail for you in the office."

"Thank you," said Holcombe.

A few hours later Carroll was watching the roulette wheel in the gambling-hall of the Isabella when he saw Meakim come in out of the darkness, and stand staring in the doorway,

blinking at the lights and mopping his face. He had been running, and was visibly excited. Carroll crossed over to him and pushed him out into the quiet of the terrace. "What is it?" he asked.

"Have you seen Holcombe?" Meakim demanded in reply.

"Not since this afternoon. Why?"

Meakim breathed heavily, and fanned himself with his hat. "Well, he's after Winthrop Allen, that's all," he panted. "And when he finds him there's going to be a muss. The boy's gone crazy. He's not safe."

"Why? What do you mean? What's Allen done to him?"

"Nothing to him, but to a friend of his. He got a letter to-night in the mail that came with Allen. It was from his sister. She wrote him all the latest news about Allen, and give him fits for robbing an old lady who's been kind to her. She wanted that Holcombe should come right back and see what could be done about it. She didn't know, of course, that Allen was coming here. The old lady kept a private school on Fifth Avenue, and Allen had charge of her savings."

"What is her name?" Carroll asked.

"Field, I think. Martha Field was——"

"The dirty blackguard!" cried Carroll. He turned sharply away and returned again to

seize Meakim's arm. "Go on," he demanded. "What did she say?"

"You know her too, do you?" said Meakim, shaking his head sympathetically. "Well, that's all. She used to teach his sister. She seems to be a sort of fashionable——"

"I know," said Carroll, roughly. "She taught my sister. She teaches everybody's sister. She's the sweetest, simplest old soul that ever lived. Holcombe's dead right to be angry. She almost lived at their house when his sister was ill."

"Tut! you don't say?" commented Meakim, gravely. "Well, his sister's pretty near crazy about it. He give me the letter to read. It got me all stirred up. It was just writ in blood. She must be a fine girl, his sister. She says this Miss Martha's money was the last thing Allen took. He didn't use her stuff to speculate with, but cashed it in just before he sailed and took it with him for spending-money. His sister says she's too proud to take help, and she's too old to work."

"How much did he take?"

"Sixty thousand. She's been saving for over forty years."

Carroll's mind took a sudden turn. "And Holcombe?" he demanded, eagerly. "What is he going to do? Nothing silly, I hope."

"Well, that's just it. That's why I come to

find you," Meakim answered, uneasily. "I don't want him to qualify for no Criminal Stakes. I got no reason to love him either—But you know—" he ended, impotently.

"Yes, I understand," said Carroll. "That's what I meant. Confound the boy, why didn't he stay in his law courts! What did he say?"

"Oh, he just raged around. He said he'd tell Allen there was an extradition treaty that Allen didn't know about, and that if Allen didn't give him the sixty thousand he'd put it in force and make him go back and stand trial."

"Compounding a felony, is he?"

"No, nothing of the sort," said Meakim, indignantly. "There isn't any extradition treaty, so he wouldn't be doing anything wrong except lying a bit."

"Well, it's blackmail, anyway."

"What, blackmail a man like Allen? Huh! He's fair game, if there ever was any. But it won't work with him, that's what I'm afraid of. He's too cunning to be taken in by it, he is. He had good legal advice before he came here, or he wouldn't have come."

Carroll was pacing up and down the terrace. He stopped and spoke over his shoulder. "Does Holcombe think Allen has the money with him?" he asked.

"Yes, he's sure of it. That's what makes

him so keen. He says Allen wouldn't dare bank it at Gibraltar, because if he ever went over there to draw on it he would get caught, so he must have brought it with him here. And he got here so late that Holcombe believes it's in Allen's rooms now, and he's like a dog that smells a rat, after it. Allen wasn't in when he went up to his room, and he's started out hunting for him, and if he don't find him I shouldn't be a bit surprised if he broke into the room and just took it."

"For God's sake!" cried Carroll. "He wouldn't do that?"

Meakim pulled and fingered at his heavy watch-chain and laughed doubtfully. "I don't know," he said. "He wouldn't have done it three months ago, but he's picked up a great deal since then—since he has been with us. He's asking for Captain Reese, too."

"What's he want with that blackguard?"

"I don't know; he didn't tell me."

"Come," said Carroll, quickly. "We must stop him." He ran lightly down the steps of the terrace to the beach, with Meakim waddling heavily after him. "He's got too much at stake, Meakim," he said, in half-apology, as they tramped through the sand. "He mustn't spoil it. We won't let him."

Holcombe had searched the circuit of Tangier's

small extent with fruitless effort, his anger increasing momentarily and feeding on each fresh disappointment. When he had failed to find the man he sought in any place, he returned to the hotel and pushed open the door of the smoking-room as fiercely as though he meant to take those within by surprise.

"Has Mr. Allen returned?" he demanded. "Or Captain Reese?" The attendant thought not, but he would go and see. "No," Holcombe said, "I will look for myself." He sprang up the stairs to the third floor, and turned down a passage to a door at its farthest end. Here he stopped and knocked gently. "Reese," he called; "Reese!" There was no response to his summons, and he knocked again, with more impatience, and then cautiously turned the handle of the door, and, pushing it forward, stepped into the room. "Reese," he said, softly, "its Holcombe. Are you here?" The room was dark except for the light from the hall, which shone dimly past him and fell upon a gun-rack hanging on the wall opposite. Holcombe hurried toward this and ran his hands over it, and passed on quickly from that to the mantel and the tables, stumbling over chairs and riding-boots as he groped about, and tripping on the skin of some animal that lay stretched upon the floor. He felt his way

around the entire circuit of the room, and halted near the door with an exclamation of disappointment. By this time his eyes had become accustomed to the darkness, and he noted the white surface of the bed in a far corner and ran quickly toward it, groping with his hands about the posts at its head. He closed his fingers with a quick gasp of satisfaction on a leather belt that hung from it, heavy with cartridges and a revolver that swung from its holder. Holcombe pulled this out and jerked back the lever, spinning the cylinder around under the edge of his thumb. He felt the grease of each cartridge as it passed under his nail. The revolver was loaded in each chamber, and Holcombe slipped it into the pocket of his coat and crept out of the room, closing the door softly behind him. He met no one in the hall or on the stairs, and passed on quickly to a room on the second floor. There was a light in this room which showed through the transom and under the crack at the floor, and there was a sound of some one moving about within. Holcombe knocked gently and waited.

The movement on the other side of the door ceased, and after a pause a voice asked who was there. Holcombe hesitated a second before answering, and then said, "It is a servant, sir, with a note for Mr. Allen."

At the sound of some one moving toward the door from within, Holcombe threw his shoulder against the panel and pressed forward. There was the click of the key turning in the lock and of the withdrawal of a bolt, and the door was partly opened. Holcombe pushed it back with his shoulder, and, stepping quickly inside, closed it again behind him.

The man within, into whose presence he had forced himself, confronted him with a look of some alarm, which increased in surprise as he recognized his visitor. "Why, Holcombe!" he exclaimed. He looked past him as though expecting some one else to follow. "I thought it was a servant," he said.

Holcombe made no answer, but surveyed the other closely, and with a smile of content. The man before him was of erect carriage, with white hair and whiskers, cut after an English fashion which left the mouth and chin clean shaven. He was of severe and dignified appearance, and though standing as he was in dishabille still gave in his bearing the look of an elderly gentleman who had lived a self-respecting, well-cared-for, and well-ordered life. The room about him was littered with the contents of opened trunks and uncorded boxes. He had been interrupted in the task of unpacking and arranging these possessions, but he stepped unresentfully toward

the bed where his coat lay, and pulled it on, feeling at the open collar of his shirt, and giving a glance of apology toward the disorder of the apartment.

"The night was so warm," he said, in explanation. "I have been trying to get things to rights. I—" He was speaking in some obvious embarrassment, and looked uncertainly toward the intruder for help. But Holcombe made no explanation, and gave him no greeting. "I heard in the hotel that you were here," the other continued, still striving to cover up the difficulty of the situation, "and I am sorry to hear that you are going so soon." He stopped, and as Holcombe still continued smiling, drew himself up stiffly. The look on his face hardened into one of offended dignity.

"Really, Mr. Holcombe," he said, sharply, and with strong annoyance in his tone, "if you have forced yourself into this room for no other purpose than to stand there and laugh, I must ask you to leave it. You may not be conscious of it, but your manner is offensive." He turned impatiently to the table, and began rearranging the papers upon it. Holcombe shifted the weight of his body as it rested against the door from one shoulder-blade to the other and closed his hands over the door-knob behind him.

"I had a letter to-night from home about

you, Allen," he began, comfortably. "The person who wrote it was anxious that I should return to New York, and set things working in the District Attorney's office in order to bring you back. It isn't you they want so much as——"

"How dare you?" cried the embezzler, sternly, in the voice with which one might interrupt another in words of shocking blasphemy.

"How dare I what?" asked Holcombe.

"How dare you refer to my misfortune? You of all others—" He stopped, and looked at his visitor with flashing eyes. "I thought you a gentleman," he said, reproachfully; "I thought you a man of the world, a man who in spite of your office, official position, or, rather, on account of it, could feel and understand the—a—terrible position in which I am placed, and that you would show consideration. Instead of which," he cried, his voice rising in indignation, "you have come apparently to mock at me. If the instinct of a gentleman does not teach you to be silent, I shall have to force you to respect my feelings. You can leave the room, sir. Now, at once." He pointed with his arm at the door against which Holcombe was leaning, the fingers of his outstretched hand trembling visibly.

"Nonsense. Your misfortune! What rot!"

Holcombe growled resentfully. His eyes wandered around the room as though looking for some one who might enjoy the situation with him, and then returned to Allen's face. "You mustn't talk like that to me," he said, in serious remonstrance. "A man who has robbed people who trusted him for three years, as you have done, can't afford to talk of his misfortune. You were too long about it, Allen. You had too many chances to put it back. *You've* no feelings to be hurt. Besides, if you have, I'm in a hurry, and I've not the time to consider them. Now, what I want of you is—"

"Mr. Holcombe," interrupted the other, earnestly.

"Sir," replied the visitor.

"Mr. Holcombe," began Allen, slowly, and with impressive gravity, "I do not want any words with you about this, or with any one else. I am here owing to a combination of circumstances which have led me through hopeless, endless trouble. What I have gone through with nobody knows. That is something no one but I can ever understand. But that is now at an end. I have taken refuge in flight and safety, where another might have remained and compromised and suffered; but I am a weaker brother, and—as for punishment, my own conscience, which has punished me so

terribly in the past, will continue to do so in the future. I am greatly to be pitied, Mr. Holcombe, greatly to be pitied. And no one knows that better than yourself. You know the value of the position I held in New York City, and how well I was suited to it, and it to me. And now I am robbed of it all. I am an exile in this wilderness. Surely, Mr. Holcombe, this is not the place nor the time when you should insult me by recalling the——"

"You contemptible hypocrite," said Holcombe, slowly. "What an ass you must think I am! Now, listen to me."

"No, *you* listen to me," thundered the other. He stepped menacingly forward, his chest heaving under his open shirt, and his fingers opening and closing at his side. "Leave the room, I tell you," he cried, "or I shall call the servants and make you!" He paused with a short, mocking laugh. "Who do you think I am?" he asked; "a child that you can insult and gibe at? I'm not a prisoner in the box for you to browbeat and bully, Mr. District Attorney. You seem to forget that I am out of your jurisdiction now."

He waited, and his manner seemed to invite Holcombe to make some angry answer to his tone, but the young man remained grimly silent.

"You are a very important young person at home, Harry," Allen went on, mockingly. "But New York State laws do not reach as far as Africa."

"Quite right; that's it exactly," said Holcombe, with cheerful alacrity. "I'm glad you have grasped the situation so soon. That makes it easier for me. Now, what I have been trying to tell you is this. I received a letter about you to-night. It seems that before leaving New York you converted bonds and mortgages belonging to Miss Martha Field, which she had intrusted to you, into ready money. And that you took this money with you. Now, as this is the first place you have stopped since leaving New York, except Gibraltar, where you could not have banked it, you must have it with you now, here in this town, in this hotel, possibly in this room. What else you have belonging to other poor devils and corporations does not concern me. It's yours as far as I mean to do anything about it. But this sixty thousand dollars which belongs to Miss Field, who is the best, purest, and kindest woman I have ever known, and who has given away more money than you ever stole, is going back with me to-morrow to New York." Holcombe leaned forward as he spoke, and rapped with his knuckles on the table. Allen con-

fronted him in amazement, in which there was not so much surprise at what the other threatened to do as at the fact that it was he who had proposed doing it.

"I don't understand," he said, slowly, with the air of a bewildered child.

"It's plain enough," replied the other, impatiently. "I tell you I want sixty thousand dollars of the money you have with you. You can understand that, can't you?"

"But how?" expostulated Allen. "You don't mean to rob me, do you, Harry?" he asked, with a laugh.

"You're a very stupid person for so clever a one," Holcombe said, impatiently. "You must give me sixty thousand dollars—and if you don't, I'll take it. Come, now, where is it—in that box?" He pointed with his finger toward a square travelling-case covered with black leather that stood open on the table filled with papers and blue envelopes.

"Take it!" exclaimed Allen. "You, Henry Holcombe? Is it you who are speaking? Do I hear you?" He looked at Holcombe with eyes full of genuine wonder and a touch of fear. As he spoke his hand reached out mechanically and drew the leather-bound box toward him.

"Ah, it is in that box, then," said Holcombe,

in a quiet, grave tone. "Now count it out, and be quick."

"Are you drunk?" cried the other, fiercely. "Do you propose to turn highwayman and thief? What do you mean?" Holcombe reached quickly across the table toward the box, but the other drew it back, snapping the lid down, and hugging it close against his breast. "If you move, Holcombe," he cried, in a voice of terror and warning, "I'll call the people of the house and—and expose you."

"Expose me, you idiot," returned Holcombe, fiercely. "How dare *you* talk to *me* like that!"

Allen dragged the table more evenly between them, as a general works on his defenses even while he parleys with the enemy. "It's you who are the idiot!" he cried. "Suppose you could overcome me, which would be harder than you think, what are you going to do with the money? Do you suppose I'd let you leave this country with it? Do you imagine for a moment that I would give it up without raising my hand? I'd have you dragged to prison from your bed this very night, or I'd have you seized as you set your foot upon the wharf. I would appeal to our Consul-General. As far as he knows, I am as worthy of protection as you are yourself, and, failing him, I'd appeal to the law of the land." He stopped for want of breath,

and then began again with the air of one who finds encouragement in the sound of his own voice. "They may not understand extradition here, Holcombe," he said, "but a thief is a thief all the world over. What you may be in New York isn't going to help you here; neither is your father's name. To these people you would be only a hotel thief who forces his way into other men's rooms at night and——"

"You poor thing," interrupted Holcombe. "Do you know where you are?" he demanded. "You talk, Allen, as though we were within sound of the cable-cars on Broadway. This hotel is not the Brunswick, and this Consul-General you speak of is another blackguard who knows that a word from me at Washington, on my return, or a letter from here would lose him his place and his liberty. He's as much of a rascal as any of them, and he knows that I know it and that I may use that knowledge *He* won't help you. And as for the law of the land"—Holcombe's voice rose and broke in a mocking laugh—"there is no law of the land. *That's why you're here!* You are in a place populated by exiles and outlaws like yourself, who have preyed upon society until society has turned and frightened each of them off like a dog with his tail between his legs. Don't give yourself confidence, Allen. That's all you are,

that's all we are—two dogs fighting for a stolen bone. The man who rules you here is an ignorant negro, debauched and vicious and a fanatic. He is shut off from every one, even to the approach of a British ambassador. And what do you suppose he cares for a dog of a Christian like you, who has been robbed in a hotel by another Christian? And these others. Do you suppose they care? Call out—cry for help, and tell them that you have half a million dollars in this room, and they will fall on you and strip you of every cent of it, and leave you to walk the beach for work. Now, what are you going to do? Will you give me the money I want to take back where it belongs, or will you call for help and lose it all?"

The two men confronted each other across the narrow length of the table. The blood had run to Holcombe's face, but the face of the other was drawn and pale with fear.

"You can't frighten me," he gasped, rallying his courage with an effort of the will. "You are talking nonsense. This is a respectable hotel; it isn't a den of thieves. You are trying to frighten me out of the money with your lies and your lawyer's tricks, but you will find that I am not so easily fooled. You are dealing with a man, Holcombe, who suffered to get what he has, and who doesn't mean to let it go without

a fight for it. Come near me, I warn you, and I shall call for help."

Holcombe backed slowly away from the table and tossed up his hands with the gesture of one who gives up his argument. "You will have it, will you?" he muttered, grimly. "Very well, you *shall* fight for it." He turned quickly and drove in the bolt of the door and placed his shoulders over the electric button in the wall. "I have warned you," he said, softly. "I have told you where you are, and that you have nothing to expect from the outside. You are absolutely in my power to do with as I please." He stopped, and, without moving his eyes from Allen's face, drew the revolver from the pocket of his coat. His manner was so terrible that Allen gazed at him, breathing faintly, and with his eyes fixed in horrible fascination. "There is no law," Holcombe repeated, softly. "There is no help for you now or later. It is a question of two men locked in a room with a table and sixty thousand dollars between them. That is the situation. Two men and sixty thousand dollars. We have returned to first principles, Allen. It is a man against a man, and there is no Court of Appeal."

Allen's breath came back to him with a gasp, as though he had been shocked with a sudden downpour of icy water.

"There is!" he cried. "There *is* a Court of Appeal. For God's sake, wait. I appeal to Henry Holcombe, to Judge Holcombe's son. I appeal to your good name, Harry, to your fame in the world. Think what you are doing; for the love of God, don't murder me. I'm a criminal, I know, but not what you would be, Holcombe; not that. You are mad or drunk. You wouldn't, you couldn't do it. Think of it! *You*, Henry Holcombe. *You*."

The fingers of Holcombe's hand moved and tightened around the butt of the pistol, the sweat sprang from the pores of his palm. He raised the revolver and pointed it. "My sin's on my own head," he said. "Give me the money."

The older man glanced fearfully back of him at the open window, through which a sea breeze moved the palms outside, so that they seemed to whisper together as though aghast at the scene before them. The window was three stories from the ground, and Allen's eyes returned to the stern face of the younger man. As they stood silent there came to them the sound of some one moving in the hall, and of men's voices whispering together. Allen's face lit with a sudden radiance of hope, and Holcombe's arm moved uncertainly.

"I fancy," he said, in a whisper, "that those

are my friends. They have some idea of my purpose, and they have come to learn more. If you call, I will let them in, and they will strangle you into silence until I get the money."

The two men eyed each other steadily, the older seeming to weigh the possible truth of Holcombe's last words in his mind. Holcombe broke the silence in a lighter tone.

"Playing the policeman is a new rôle to me," he said, "and I warn you that I have but little patience; and, besides, my hand is getting tired, and this thing is at full cock."

Allen, for the first time, lowered the box upon the table and drew from it a bundle of notes bound together with elastic bandages. Holcombe's eyes lighted as brightly at the sight as though the notes were for his own private pleasures in the future.

"Be quick!" he said. "I cannot be responsible for the men outside."

Allen bent over the money, his face drawing into closer and sharper lines as the amount grew, under his fingers, to the sum Holcombe had demanded.

"Sixty thousand!" he said, in a voice of desperate calm.

"Good!" whispered Holcombe. "Pass it over to me. I hope I have taken the most

of what you have," he said, as he shoved the notes into his pocket; "but this is something. Now I warn you," he added, as he lowered the trigger of the revolver and put it out of sight, "that any attempt to regain this will be futile. I am surrounded by friends; no one knows you or cares about you. I shall sleep in my room to-night without precaution, for I know that the money is now mine. Nothing you can do will recall it. Your cue is silence and secrecy as to what you have lost and as to what you still have with you."

He stopped in some confusion, interrupted by a sharp knock at the door and two voices calling his name. Allen shrank back in terror.

"You coward!" he hissed. "You promised me you'd be content with what you have." Holcombe looked at him in amazement. "And now your accomplices are to have their share, too, are they?" the embezzler whispered, fiercely. "You lied to me; you mean to take it all."

Holcombe, for an answer, drew back the bolt, but so softly that the sound of his voice drowned the noise it made.

"No, not to-night," he said, briskly, so that the sound of his voice penetrated into the hall beyond. "I mustn't stop any longer, I'm keeping you up. It has been very pleasant to

have heard all that news from home. It was such a chance, my seeing you before I sailed. Good-night." He paused and pretended to listen. "No, Allen, I don't think it's a servant," he said. "It's some of my friends looking for me. This is my last night on shore, you see." He threw open the door and confronted Meakim and Carroll as they stood in some confusion in the dark hall. "Yes, it is some of my friends," Holcombe continued. "I'll be with you in a minute," he said to them. Then he turned, and, crossing the room in their sight, shook Allen by the hand, and bade him good-night and good-by.

The embezzler's revulsion of feeling was so keen and the relief so great that he was able to smile as Holcombe turned and left him. "I wish you a pleasant voyage," he said, faintly.

Then Holcombe shut the door on him, closing him out from their sight. He placed his hands on a shoulder of each of the two men and jumped step by step down the stairs like a boy as they descended silently in front of him. At the foot of the stairs Carroll turned and confronted him sternly, staring him in the face. Meakim at one side eyed him curiously.

"Well?" said Carroll, with one hand upon Holcombe's wrist.

Holcombe shook his hand free, laughing.

"Well," he answered, "I persuaded him to make restitution."

"You persuaded him!" exclaimed Carroll, impatiently. "How?"

Holcombe's eyes avoided those of the two inquisitors. He drew a long breath, and then burst into a loud fit of hysterical laughter. The two men surveyed him grimly. "I argued with him, of course," said Holcombe, gayly. "That is my business, man; you forget that I am a District Attorney——"

"*We* didn't forget it," said Carroll, fiercely. "Did *you?* What did you do?"

Holcombe backed away up the stairs shaking his head and laughing. "I shall never tell you," he said. He pointed with his hand down the second flight of stairs. "Meet me in the smoking-room," he continued. "I will be there in a minute, and we will have a banquet. Ask the others to come. I have something to do first."

The two men turned reluctantly away, and continued on down the stairs without speaking and with their faces filled with doubt. Holcombe ran first to Reese's room and replaced the pistol in its holder. He was trembling as he threw the thing from him, and had barely reached his own room and closed the door when a sudden faintness overcame him. The

weight he had laid on his nerves was gone and the laughter had departed from his face. He stood looking back at what he had escaped as a man reprieved at the steps of the gallows turns his head to glance at the rope he has cheated. Holcombe tossed the bundle of notes upon the table and took an unsteady step across the room. Then he turned suddenly and threw himself upon his knees and buried his face in the pillow.

The sun rose the next morning on a cool, beautiful day, and the Consul's boat, with the American flag trailing from the stern, rose and fell on the bluest of blue waters as it carried Holcombe and his friends to the steamer's side.

"We are going to miss you very much," Mrs. Carroll said. "I hope you won't forget to send us word of yourself."

Miss Terrill said nothing. She was leaning over the side trailing her hand in the water, and watching it run between her slim pink fingers. She raised her eyes to find Holcombe looking at her intently with a strange expression of wistfulness and pity, at which she smiled brightly back at him, and began to plan vivaciously with Captain Reese for a ride that same afternoon.

They separated over the steamer's deck, and Meakim, for the hundredth time, and in the

lack of conversation which comes at such moments, offered Holcombe a fresh cigar.

"But I have got eight of yours now," said Holcombe.

"That's all right; put it in your pocket," said the Tammany chieftain, "and smoke it after dinner. You'll need 'em. They're better than those you'll get on the steamer, and they never went through a custom-house."

Holcombe cleared his throat in some slight embarrassment. "Is there anything I can do for you in New York, Meakim?" he asked. "Anybody I can see, or to whom I can deliver a message?"

"No," said Meakim. "I write pretty often. Don't you worry about me," he added, gratefully. "I'll be back there some day myself, when the law of limitation lets me."

Holcombe laughed. "Well," he said, "I'd be glad to do something for you if you'd let me know what you'd like."

Meakim put his hands behind his back and puffed meditatively on his cigar, rolling it between his lips with his tongue. Then he turned it between his fingers and tossed the ashes over the side of the boat. He gave a little sigh, and then frowned at having done so. "I'll tell you what you *can* do for me, Holcombe," he said, smiling. "Some night I wish you would

go down to Fourteenth Street, some night this spring, when the boys are sitting out on the steps in front of the Hall, and just take a drink for me at Ed Lally's; just for luck. Will you? That's what I'd like to do. I don't know nothing better than Fourteenth Street of a summer evening, with all the people crowding into Pastor's on one side of the Hall, and the Third Avenue L cars running by on the other. That's a gay sight; ain't it now? With all the girls coming in and out of Theiss's, and the sidewalks crowded. One of them warm nights when they have to have the windows open, and you can hear the music in at Pastor's, and the audience clapping their hands. That's great, isn't it? Well," he laughed and shook his head. "I'll be back there some day, won't I," he said, wistfully, "and hear it for myself."

"Carroll," said Holcombe, drawing the former to one side, "suppose I see this cabman when I reach home, and get him to withdraw the charge, or agree not to turn up when it comes to trial."

Carroll's face clouded in an instant. "Now, listen to me, Holcombe," he said. "You let my dirty work alone. There's lots of my friends who have nothing better to do than just that. You have something better to do, and you leave me and my rows to others. I like you for what you are, and not for what you can

do for me. I don't mean that I don't appreciate your offer, but it shouldn't have come from an Assistant District Attorney to a fugitive criminal."

"What nonsense!" said Holcombe.

"Don't say that; don't say that!" said Carroll, quickly, as though it hurt him. "You wouldn't have said it a month ago."

Holcombe eyed the other with an alert, confident smile. "No, Carroll," he answered, "I would not." He put his hand on the other's shoulder with a suggestion in his manner of his former self, and with a touch of patronage. "I have learned a great deal in a month," he said. "Seven battles were won in seven days once. All my life I have been fighting causes, Carroll, and principles. I have been working with laws against law-breakers. I have never yet fought a man. It was not poor old Meakim, the individual, I prosecuted, but the corrupt politician. Now, here I have been thrown with men and women on as equal terms as a crew of sailors cast away upon a desert island. We were each a law unto himself. And I have been brought face to face, and for the first time in my life, not with principles of conduct, not with causes, and not with laws, but with my fellow men."

THE BOY ORATOR OF ZEPATA CITY

The day was cruelly hot, with unwarranted gusts of wind which swept the red dust in fierce eddies in at one end of Main Street and out at the other, and waltzed fantastically across the prairie. When they had passed, human beings opened their eyes again to blink hopelessly at the white sun, and swore or gasped, as their nature moved them. There were very few human beings in the streets, either in Houston Avenue, where there were dwelling-houses, or in the business quarter on Main Street. They were all at the new court-house, and every one possessed of proper civic pride was either in the packed court-room itself, or standing on the high steps outside, or pacing the long, freshly calcimined corridors, where there was shade and less dust. It was an eventful day in the history of Zepata City. The court-house had been long in coming, the appropriation had been denied again and again; but at last it stood a proud and hideous fact, like a gray prison, towering above the bare, undecorated brick stores and the frame houses on the prairie around it, new, raw, and

cheap, from the tin statue on the dome to the stucco round its base already cracking with the sun. Piles of lumber and scaffolding and the lime beds the builders had left still lay on the unsodded square, and the bursts of wind drove the shavings across it, as they had done since the first day of building, when the Hon. Horatio Macon, who had worked for the appropriation, had laid the corner-stone and received the homage of his constituents.

It seemed a particularly happy and appropriate circumstance that the first business in the new court-room should be of itself of an important and momentous nature, something that dealt not only with the present but with the past of Zepata, and that the trial of so celebrated an individual as Abe Barrow should open the court-house with *éclat*, as Emma Abbott, who had come all the way from San Antonio to do it, had opened the new opera-house the year before. The District Attorney had said it would not take very long to dispose of Barrow's case, but he had promised it would be an interesting if brief trial, and the court-room was filled even to the open windows, where men sat crowded together, with the perspiration running down their faces, and the red dust settling and turning white upon their shoulders.

Abe Barrow, the prisoner, had been as closely

associated with the early history of Zepata as Colonel Macon himself, and was as widely known; he had killed in his day several of the Zepata citizens, and two visiting brother-desperadoes, and the corner where his gambling-house had stood was still known as Barrow's Corner, to the regret of the druggist who had opened a shop there. Ten years before, the murder of Deputy Sheriff Welsh had led him to the penitentiary, and a month previous to the opening of the new court-house he had been freed, and arrested at the prison gate to stand trial for the murder of Hubert Thompson. The fight with Thompson had been a fair fight —so those said who remembered it—and Thompson was a man they could well spare; but the case against Barrow had been prepared during his incarceration by the new and youthful District Attorney, "Judge" Henry Harvey, and as it offered a fitting sacrifice for the dedication of the new temple of justice, the people were satisfied and grateful.

The court-room was as bare of ornament as the cell from which the prisoner had just been taken. There was an imitation walnut clock at the back of the Judge's hair-cloth sofa, his revolving chair, and his high desk. This was the only ornament. Below was the green table of the District Attorney, upon which rested his

papers and law-books and his high hat. To one side sat the jury, ranch-owners and prominent citizens, proud of having to serve on this the first day; and on the other the prisoner in his box. Around them gathered the citizens of Zepata in close rows, crowded together on unpainted benches; back of them more citizens standing and a few awed Mexicans; and around all the whitewashed walls. Colonel John Stogart, of Dallas, the prisoner's attorney, procured obviously at great expense, no one knew by whom, and Barrow's wife, a thin yellow-faced woman in a mean-fitting showy gown, sat among the local celebrities at the District Attorney's elbow. She was the only woman in the room.

Colonel Stogart's speech had been good. The citizens were glad it had been so good; it had kept up the general tone of excellence, and it was well that the best lawyer of Dallas should be present on this occasion, and that he should have made what the citizens of Zepata were proud to believe was one of the efforts of his life. As they said, a court-house such as this one was not open for business every day. It was also proper that Judge Truax, who was a real Judge, and not one by courtesy only, as was the young District Attorney, should sit upon the bench. He also was associated with

the early days and with the marvellous growth of Zepata City. He had taught the young District Attorney much of what he knew, and his long white hair and silver-rimmed spectacles gave dignity and the appearance of calm justice to the bare room and to the heated words of the rival orators.

Colonel Stogart ceased speaking, and the District Attorney sucked in his upper lip with a nervous, impatient sigh as he recognized that the visiting attorney had proved murder in the second degree, and that an execution in the jail-yard would not follow as a fitting sequence.

But he was determined that so far as in him lay he would at least send his man back to the penitentiary for the remainder of his life.

Young Harry Harvey, "The Boy Orator of Zepata City," as he was called, was very dear to the people of that booming town. In their eyes he was one of the most promising young men in the whole great unwieldy State of Texas, and the boy orator thought they were probably right, but he was far too clever to let them see it. He was clever in his words and in his deeds and in his appearance. And he dressed much more carefully than any other man in town, with a frock-coat and a white tie winter and summer, and a fine high hat. That he was

slight and short of stature was something he could not help, and was his greatest, keenest regret, and that Napoleon was also short and slight did not serve to satisfy him or to make his regret less continual. What availed the sharply cut, smoothly shaven face and the eyes that flashed when he was moved, or the bell-like voice, if every unlettered ranchman or ranger could place both hands on his shoulders and look down at him from heights above? But they forgot this and he forgot it before he had reached the peroration of his closing speech. They saw only the Harry Harvey they knew and adored moving and rousing them with his voice, trembling with indignation when he wished to tremble, playing all his best tricks in his best manner, and cutting the air with sharp, cruel words when he was pleased to be righteously just.

The young District Attorney turned slowly on his heels, and swept the court-room carelessly with a glance of the clever black eyes. The moment was his. He saw all the men he knew—the men who made his little world—crowding silently forward, forgetful of the heat, of the suffocating crush of those about them, of the wind that rattled the doors in the corridors, and conscious only of him. He saw his old preceptor watching keenly from the bench,

with a steady glance of perfect appreciation, such as that with which one actor in the box compliments the other on the stage. He saw the rival attorney—the great lawyer from the great city—nervously smiling, with a look of confidence that told the lack of it; and he saw the face of the prisoner grim and set and hopelessly defiant. The boy orator allowed his uplifted arm to fall until the fingers pointed at the prisoner.

"This man," he said, and as he spoke even the wind in the corridors hushed for the moment, "is no part or parcel of Zepata City of to-day. He comes to us a relic of the past—a past that has brought honor to many, wealth to some, and which is dear to all of us who love the completed purpose of their work; a past that was full of hardships and glorious efforts in the face of daily disappointments, embitterments, and rebuffs. But the part *this* man played in that past lives only in the rude court records of that day, in the traditions of the gambling-hell and the saloons, and on the headstones of his victims. He was one of the excrescences of that unsettled period, an unhappy evil—an inevitable evil, I might almost say, as the Mexican horse-thieves and the prairie fires and the Indian outbreaks were inevitable, as our fathers who built this beautiful city knew

to their cost. The same chance that was given to them to make a home for themselves in the wilderness, to help others to make their homes, to assist the civilization and progress not only of this city, but of the whole Lone Star State, was given to him, and he refused it, and blocked the way of others, and kept back the march of progress, until to-day, civilization, which has waxed great and strong—not on account of him, remember, but in spite of him—sweeps him out of its way, and crushes him and his fellows."

The young District Attorney allowed his arm to drop, and turned to the jury, leaning easily with his bent knuckles on the table.

"Gentlemen," he said, in his pleasant tones of every-day politeness, "the 'bad man' has become an unknown quantity in Zepata City and in the State of Texas. It lies with you to see that he remains so. He went out of existence with the blanket Indian and the buffalo. He is dead, and he must *not* be resurrected. He was a picturesque evil of those early days, but civilization has no use for him, and it has killed him, as the railroads and the barb-wire fence have killed the cowboy. He does not belong here; he does not fit in; he is not wanted. We want men who can breed good cattle, who can build manufactories and open

banks; storekeepers who can undersell those of other cities; and professional men who know their business. We do *not* want desperadoes and 'bad men' and faro-dealers and men who are quick on the trigger. A foolish and morbid publicity has cloaked men of this class with a notoriety which cheap and pernicious literature has greatly helped to disseminate. They have been made romantic when they were brutal, brave when they were foolhardy, heroes when they were only bullies and blackguards. This man, Abe Barrow, the prisoner at the bar, belongs to that class. He enjoys and has enjoyed a reputation as a 'bad man,' a desperate and brutal ruffian. Free him to-day, and you set a premium on such reputations; acquit him of this crime, and you encourage others to like evil. Let him go, and he will walk the streets with a swagger, and boast that you were afraid to touch him—*afraid*, gentlemen—and children and women will point after him as the man who has sent nine others into eternity, and who yet walks the streets a free man. And he will become, in the eyes of the young and the weak, a hero and a god. This is unfortunate, but it is true.

"Now, gentlemen, we want to keep the streets of this city so safe that a woman can walk them at midnight without fear of insult,

and a man can express his opinion on the corner without being shot in the back for doing so."

The District Attorney turned from the jury with a bow, and faced Judge Truax.

"For the last ten years, your honor, this man, Abner Barrow, has been serving a term of imprisonment in the State penitentiary; I ask you to send him back there again for the remainder of his life. It will be the better place for him, and we will be happier in knowing we have done our duty in placing him there. Abe Barrow is out of date. He has missed step with the march of progress, and has been out of step for ten years, and it is best for all that he should remain out of it until he, who has sent nine other men unprepared to meet their God——"

"He is not on trial for the murder of nine men," interrupted Colonel Stogart, springing from his chair, "but for the justifiable killing of one, and I demand, your honor, that——"

"—has sent nine other men to meet their Maker," continued the District Attorney, "meets with the awful judgment of a higher court than this."

Colonel Stogart smiled scornfully at the platitude, and sat down with an expressive shrug; but no one noticed him.

The District Attorney raised his arm and

faced the court-room. "It cannot be said of *us*," he cried, "that we have sat idle in the market-place. We have advanced and advanced in the last ten years, until we have reached the very foremost place with civilized people. This Rip Van Winkle of the past returns to find a city where he left a prairie town, a bank where he spun his roulette wheel, this magnificent court-house instead of a vigilance committee. And what is his part in this new court-house, which to-day, for the first time, throws open its doors to protect the just and to punish the unjust?

"Is he there in the box among those honorable men, the gentlemen of the jury? Is he in that great crowd of intelligent, public-spirited citizens who make the bone and sinew of this our fair city? Is he on the honored bench dispensing justice, and making the intricacies of the law straight? No, gentlemen; he has no part in our triumph. He is there, in the prisoners' pen, an outlaw, a convicted murderer, and an unconvicted assassin, the last of his race —the bullies and bad men of the border—a thing to be forgotten and put away forever from the sight of man. He has outlasted his time; he is a superfluity and an outrage on our reign of decency and order. And I ask you, gentlemen, to put him away where he will not hear

the voice of man nor children's laughter, nor see a woman smile, where he will not even see the face of the warden who feeds him, nor sunlight except as it is filtered through the iron bars of a jail. Bury him with the bitter past, with the lawlessness that has gone—that has gone, thank God—and which must *not* return. Place him in the cell where he belongs, and whence, had justice been done, he would never have been taken alive."

The District Attorney sat down suddenly, with a quick nod to the Judge and the jury, and fumbled over his papers with nervous fingers. He was keenly conscious, and excited with the fervor of his own words. He heard the reluctantly hushed applause and the whispers of the crowd, and noted the quick and combined movement of the jury with a selfish sweet pleasure, which showed itself only in the tightening of the lips and nostrils. Those nearest him tugged at his sleeve and shook hands with him. He remembered this afterward as one of the rewards of the moment. He turned the documents before him over and scribbled words upon a piece of paper and read a passage in an open law-book. He did this quite mechanically, and was conscious of nothing until the foreman pronounced the prisoner at the bar guilty of murder in the second degree.

Judge Truax leaned across his desk and said, simply, that it lay in his power to sentence the prisoner to not less than two years' confinement in the State penitentiary or for the remainder of his life.

"Before I deliver sentence on you, Abner Barrow," he said, with an old man's kind severity, "is there anything you have to say on your own behalf?"

The District Attorney turned his face, as did all the others, but he did not see the prisoner. He still saw himself holding the court-room with a spell, and heard his own periods ringing against the whitewashed ceiling. The others saw a tall, broad-shouldered man leaning heavily forward over the bar of the prisoner's box. His face was white with the prison tan, markedly so in contrast with those sunburnt by the wind and sun turned toward him, and pinched and hollow-eyed and worn. When he spoke, his voice had the huskiness which comes from non-use, and cracked and broke like a child's.

"I don't know, Judge," he said, hesitatingly, and staring stupidly at the mass of faces in the well beneath him, "that I have anything to say—in my own behalf. I don't know as it would be any use. I guess what the gentleman said about me is all there is to say. He put it about right. I've had my fun, and I've got to

pay for it—that is, I thought it was fun at the time. I am not going to cry any baby act and beg off, or anything, if that's what you mean. But there is something I'd like to say if I thought you would believe me." He frowned down at the green table as though the words he wanted would not come, and his eyes wandered from one face to another, until they rested upon the bowed head of the only woman in the room. They remained there for some short time, and then Barrow drew in his breath more quickly, and turned with something like a show of confidence to the jury.

"All that man said of me is true," he said. He gave a toss of his hands as a man throws away the reins. "I admit all he says. I *am* a back number; I *am* out of date; I *was* a loafer and a blackguard. I never shot any man in the back, nor I never assassinated no one; but that's neither here nor there. I'm not in a place where I can expect people to pick out their words; but, as he says, I *am* a bad lot. He says I have enjoyed a reputation as a desperado. I am not bragging of that; I just ask you to remember that he said it. Remember it of me. I was not the sort to back down to man or beast, and I'm not now. I am not backing down, now; I'm taking my punishment. Whatever you please to make it, I'll

take it; and that," he went on, more slowly, "makes it harder for me to ask what I want to ask, and make you all believe I am not asking it for myself."

He stopped, and the silence in the room seemed to give him some faint encouragement of sympathy, though it was rather the silence of curiosity.

Colonel Stogart gave a stern look upward, and asked the prisoner's wife, in a whisper, if she knew what her husband meant to say, but she shook her head. She did not know. The District Attorney smiled indulgently at the prisoner and at the men about him, but they were watching the prisoner.

"That man there," said Barrow, pointing with one gaunt hand at the boy attorney, "told you I had no part or parcel in this city or in this world; that I belonged to the past; that I had ought to be dead. Now that's not so. I have just one thing that belongs to this city and this world—and to me; one thing that I couldn't take to jail with me, and that I'll have to leave behind me when I go back to it. I mean my wife."

The prisoner stopped, and looked so steadily at one place below him that those in the back of the court guessed for the first time that Mrs. Barrow was in the room, and craned forward

to look at her, and there was a moment of confusion and a murmur of "Get back there!" "Sit still!" The prisoner turned to Judge Truax again and squared his broad shoulders, making the more conspicuous his narrow and sunken chest.

"You, sir," he said, quietly, with a change from the tone of braggadocio with which he had begun to speak, "remember her, sir, when I married her, twelve years ago. She was Henry Holman's daughter, he who owned the San Iago Ranch and the triangle brand. I took her from the home she had with her father against that gentleman's wishes, sir, to live with me over my dance-hall at the Silver Star. You may remember her as she was then. She gave up everything a woman ought to have to come to me. She thought she was going to be happy with me; that's why she come, I guess. Maybe she was happy for about two weeks. After that first two weeks her life, sir, was a hell, and I made it a hell. I was drunk most of the time, or sleeping it off, and ugly-tempered when I was sober. There was shooting and carrying on all day and night down-stairs, and she didn't dare to leave her room. Besides that, she cared for me, and she was afraid every minute I was going to get killed. That's the way she lived for two years.

Respectable women wouldn't speak to her because she was my wife; even them that were friends of hers when she lived on the ranch wouldn't speak to her on the street—and she had no children. That was her life; she lived alone over the dance-hall; and sometimes when I was drunk—I beat her."

The man's white face reddened slowly as he said this; and he stopped, and then continued more quickly, with his eyes still fixed on those of the Judge:

"At the end of two years I killed Welsh, and they sent me to the penitentiary for ten years, and she was free. She could have gone back to her folks and got a divorce if she'd wanted to, and never seen me again. It was an escape most women'd gone down on their knees and thanked their Maker for, and blessed the day they'd been freed from a blackguardly drunken brute.

"But what did this woman do—my wife, the woman I misused and beat and dragged down in the mud with me? She was too mighty proud to go back to her people or to the friends who shook her when she was in trouble; and she sold out the place, and bought a ranch with the money, and worked it by herself, worked it day and night, until in ten years she had made herself an old woman, as you see she is to-day.

"And for what? To get *me* free again; to bring *me* things to eat in jail, and picture papers and tobacco—when she was living on bacon and potatoes, and drinking alkali water—working to pay for a lawyer to fight for *me*—to pay for the *best* lawyer! She worked in the fields with her own hands, planting and ploughing, working as I never worked for myself in my whole lazy, rotten life. That's what that woman there did for me."

The man stopped suddenly, and turned with a puzzled look toward where his wife sat, for she had dropped her head on the table in front of her, and he had heard her sobbing.

"And what I want to ask of you, sir, is to let me have two years out of jail to show her how I feel about it. I ask you not to send me back for life, sir. Give me just two years—two years of my life while I have some strength left to work for her as she worked for me. I only want to show her how I care for her *now*. I had the chance, and I wouldn't take it; and now, sir, I want to show her that I know and understand—now, when it's too late. It's all I've thought of when I was in jail, to be able to see her sitting in her own kitchen with her hands folded, and me working and sweating in the fields for her—working till every bone ached, trying to make it up to her.

"And I can't!" the man cried, suddenly, losing the control he had forced upon himself, and tossing his hands up above his head, and with his eyes fixed hopelessly on the bowed head below him. "I can't! It's too late. It's too late!"

He turned and faced the crowd and the District Attorney defiantly.

"I'm not crying for the men I killed. They're dead. I can't bring them back. But she's not dead, and I treated her worse than I treated them. *She* never harmed me, nor got in my way, nor angered me. And now, when I want to do what I can for her in the little time that's left, *he* tells you I'm a 'relic of the past,' that civilization's too good for me, that you must bury me until it's time to bury me for good. Just when I've got something I *must* live for, something I've got to do. Don't you believe me? Don't you understand?"

He turned again toward the Judge, and beat the rail before him impotently with his wasted hand. "Don't send me back for life!" he cried. "Give me a few years to work for her—two years, one year—to show her what I feel here, what I never felt for her before. Look at her, gentlemen. Look how worn she is and poorly, and look at her hands, and you men must feel how I feel. I don't ask you for myself. I don't

want to go free on my own account. I am asking it for that woman—yes, and for myself, too. I am playing to 'get back,' gentlemen. I've lost what I had, and I want to get back; and," he cried, querulously, "the game keeps going against me. It's only a few years' freedom I want. Send me back for thirty years, but not for life. My God! Judge, don't bury me alive, as that man asked you to. I'm *not* civilized, maybe; ways *have* changed. You are not the man I knew; you are all strangers to me. But I could learn. I wouldn't bother you in the old way. I only want to live with her. I won't harm the rest of you. Give me this last chance. Let me prove that what I'm saying is true."

The man stopped and stood, opening and shutting his hands upon the rail, and searching with desperate eagerness from face to face, as one who has staked all he has watches the wheel spinning his fortune away. The gentlemen of the jury sat quite motionless, looking straight ahead at the blinding sun, which came through the high, uncurtained windows opposite. Outside, the wind banged the shutters against the wall, and whistled up the street and round the tin corners of the building, but inside the room was very silent. The Mexicans at the door, who could not understand, looked curiously at the faces of the men around them, and made

sure that they had missed something of much importance. For a moment no one moved, until there was a sudden stir around the District Attorney's table, and the men stepped aside and let the woman pass them and throw herself against the prisoner's box. The prisoner bent his tall gaunt figure over the rail, and as the woman pressed his one hand against her face, touched her shoulders with the other awkwardly.

"There, now," he whispered, soothingly, "don't you take on so. Now you know how I feel, it's all right; don't take on."

Judge Truax looked at the paper on his desk for some seconds, and raised his head, coughing as he did so. "It lies—" Judge Truax began, and then stopped, and began again, in a more certain tone: "It lies at the discretion of this Court to sentence the prisoner to a term of imprisonment for two years, or for an indefinite period, or for life. Owing to— On account of certain circumstances which were—have arisen —this sentence is suspended. This court stands adjourned."

As he finished he sprang out of his chair impulsively, and with a quick authoritative nod to the young District Attorney, came quickly down the steps of the platform. Young Harvey met him at the foot with wide-open eyes.

The older man hesitated, and placed his hand upon the District Attorney's shoulder. "Harry," he said. His voice was shaken, and his hand trembled on the arm of his protégé, for he was an old man and easily moved. "Harry, my boy," he said, "do you think you could go to Austin and repeat the speech that man made to the Governor?"

The boy orator laughed, and took one of the older man's hands in one of his and pressed it quickly. "I'd like d——d well to try," he said.

THE OTHER WOMAN

YOUNG Latimer stood on one of the lower steps of the hall stairs, leaning with one hand on the broad railing and smiling down at her. She had followed him from the drawing-room and had stopped at the entrance, drawing the curtains behind her, and making, unconsciously, a dark background for her head and figure. He thought he had never seen her look more beautiful, nor that cold, fine air of thorough breeding about her which was her greatest beauty to him, more strongly in evidence.

"Well, sir," she said, "why don't you go?"

He shifted his position slightly and leaned more comfortably upon the railing, as though he intended to discuss it with her at some length.

"How can I go," he said, argumentatively, "with you standing there—looking like that?"

"I really believe," the girl said, slowly, "that he is afraid; yes, he is afraid. And you always said," she added, turning to him, "you were so brave."

"Oh, I am sure I never said that," exclaimed the young man, calmly. "I may be brave, in

fact, I am quite brave, but I never said I was. Some one must have told you."

"Yes, he is afraid," she said, nodding her head to the tall clock across the hall, "he is temporizing and trying to save time. And afraid of a man, too, and such a good man who would not hurt any one."

"You know a bishop is always a very difficult sort of a person," he said, "and when he happens to be your father, the combination is just a bit awful. Isn't it now? And especially when one means to ask him for his daughter. You know it isn't like asking him to let one smoke in his study."

"If I loved a girl," she said, shaking her head and smiling up at him, "I wouldn't be afraid of the whole world; that's what they say in books, isn't it? I would be so bold and happy."

"Oh, well, I'm bold enough," said the young man, easily; "if I had not been, I never would have asked you to marry me; and I'm happy enough—that's because I did ask you. But what if he says no," continued the youth; "what if he says he has greater ambitions for you, just as they say in books, too? What will you do? Will you run away with me? I can borrow a coach just as they used to do, and we can drive off through the Park and be married,

and come back and ask his blessing on our knees —unless he should overtake us on the elevated."

"That," said the girl, decidedly, "is flippant, and I'm going to leave you. I never thought to marry a man who would be frightened at the very first. I am greatly disappointed."

She stepped back into the drawing-room and pulled the curtains to behind her, and then opened them again and whispered, "Please don't be long," and disappeared. He waited, smiling, to see if she would make another appearance, but she did not, and he heard her touch the keys of the piano at the other end of the drawing-room. And so, still smiling and with her last words sounding in his ears, he walked slowly up the stairs and knocked at the door of the bishop's study. The bishop's room was not ecclesiastic in its character. It looked much like the room of any man of any calling who cared for his books and to have pictures about him, and copies of the beautiful things he had seen on his travels. There were pictures of the Virgin and the Child, but they were those that are seen in almost any house, and there were etchings and plaster casts, and there were hundreds of books, and dark red curtains, and an open fire that lit up the pots of brass with ferns in them, and the blue and white plaques on the top of the bookcase. The bishop sat

before his writing-table, with one hand shading his eyes from the light of a red-covered lamp, and looked up and smiled pleasantly and nodded as the young man entered. He had a very strong face, with white hair hanging at the side, but was still a young man for one in such a high office. He was a man interested in many things, who could talk to men of any profession or to the mere man of pleasure, and could interest them in what he said, and force their respect and liking. And he was very good, and had, they said, seen much trouble.

"I am afraid I interrupted you," said the young man, tentatively.

"No, I have interrupted myself," replied the bishop. "I don't seem to make this clear to myself," he said, touching the paper in front of him, "and so I very much doubt if I am going to make it clear to any one else. However," he added, smiling, as he pushed the manuscript to one side, "we are not going to talk about that now. What have you to tell me that is new?"

The younger man glanced up quickly at this, but the bishop's face showed that his words had had no ulterior meaning, and that he suspected nothing more serious to come than the gossip of the clubs or a report of the local political fight in which he was keenly interested,

or on their mission on the East Side. But it seemed an opportunity to Latimer.

"I *have* something new to tell you," he said, gravely, and with his eyes turned toward the open fire, "and I don't know how to do it exactly. I mean I don't just know how it is generally done or how to tell it best." He hesitated and leaned forward, with his hands locked in front of him, and his elbows resting on his knees. He was not in the least frightened. The bishop had listened to many strange stories, to many confessions, in this same study, and had learned to take them as a matter of course; but to-night something in the manner of the young man before him made him stir uneasily, and he waited for him to disclose the object of his visit with some impatience.

"I will suppose, sir," said young Latimer, finally, "that you know me rather well—I mean you know who my people are, and what I am doing here in New York, and who my friends are, and what my work amounts to. You have let me see a great deal of you, and I have appreciated your doing so very much; to so young a man as myself it has been a great compliment, and it has been of great benefit to me. I know that better than any one else. I say this because unless you had shown me this confidence it would have been almost impossible for me

to say to you what I am going to say now. But you have allowed me to come here frequently, and to see you and talk with you here in your study, and to see even more of your daughter. Of course, sir, you did not suppose that I came here only to see you. I came here because I found that, if I did not see Miss Ellen for a day, that that day was wasted, and that I spent it uneasily and discontentedly, and the necessity of seeing her even more frequently has grown so great that I cannot come here as often as I seem to want to come unless I am engaged to her, unless I come as her husband that is to be." The young man had been speaking very slowly and picking his words, but now he raised his head and ran on quickly.

"I have spoken to her and told her how I love her, and she has told me that she loves me, and that if you will not oppose us, will marry me. That is the news I have to tell you, sir. I don't know but that I might have told it differently, but that is it. I need not urge on you my position and all that, because I do not think that weighs with you; but I do tell you that I love Ellen so dearly that, though I am not worthy of her, of course, I have no other pleasure than to give her pleasure and to try to make her happy. I have the power to do it; but what is much more, I have the wish to do it; it is all I

think of now, and all that I can ever think of. What she thinks of me you must ask her; but what she is to me neither she can tell you nor do I believe that I myself could make you understand." The young man's face was flushed and eager, and as he finished speaking he raised his head and watched the bishop's countenance anxiously. But the older man's face was hidden by his hand as he leaned with his elbow on his writing-table. His other hand was playing with a pen, and when he began to speak, which he did after a long pause, he still turned it between his fingers and looked down at it.

"I suppose," he said, as softly as though he were speaking to himself, "that I should have known this; I suppose that I should have been better prepared to hear it. But it is one of those things which men put off—I mean those men who have children, put off—as they do making their wills, as something that is in the future and that may be shirked until it comes. We seem to think that our daughters will live with us always, just as we expect to live on ourselves until death comes one day and startles us and finds us unprepared." He took down his hand and smiled gravely at the younger man with an evident effort, and said, "I did not mean to speak so gloomily, but you see my

point of view must be different from yours. And she says she loves you, does she?" he added, gently.

Young Latimer bowed his head and murmured something inarticulately in reply, and then held his head erect again and waited, still watching the bishop's face.

"I think she might have told me," said the older man; "but then I suppose this is the better way. I am young enough to understand that the old order changes, that the customs of my father's time differ from those of to-day. And there is no alternative, I suppose," he said, shaking his head. "I am stopped and told to deliver, and have no choice. I will get used to it in time," he went on, "but it seems very hard now. Fathers are selfish, I imagine, but she is all I have."

Young Latimer looked gravely into the fire and wondered how long it would last. He could just hear the piano from below, and he was anxious to return to her. And at the same time he was drawn toward the older man before him, and felt rather guilty, as though he really were robbing him. But at the bishop's next words he gave up any thought of a speedy release, and settled himself in his chair.

"We are still to have a long talk," said the bishop. "There are many things I must know,

and of which I am sure you will inform me freely. I believe there are some who consider me hard, and even narrow on different points, but I do not think you will find me so, at least let us hope not. I must confess that for a moment I almost hoped that you might not be able to answer the questions I must ask you, but it was only for a moment. I am only too sure you will not be found wanting, and that the conclusion of our talk will satisfy us both. Yes, I am confident of that."

His manner changed, nevertheless, and Latimer saw that he was now facing a judge and not a plaintiff who had been robbed, and that he was in turn the defendant. And still he was in no way frightened.

"I like you," the bishop said, "I like you very much. As you say yourself, I have seen a great deal of you, because I have enjoyed your society, and your views and talk were good and young and fresh, and did me good. You have served to keep me in touch with the outside world, a world of which I used to know at one time a great deal. I know your people and I know you, I think, and many people have spoken to me of you. I see why now. They, no doubt, understood what was coming better than myself, and were meaning to reassure me concerning you. And they said nothing but what

was good of you. But there are certain things of which no one can know but yourself, and concerning which no other person, save myself, has a right to question you. You have promised very fairly for my daughter's future; you have suggested more than you have said, but I understood. You can give her many pleasures which I have not been able to afford; she can get from you the means of seeing more of this world in which she lives, of meeting more people, and of indulging in her charities, or in her extravagances, for that matter, as she wishes. I have no fear of her bodily comfort; her life, as far as that is concerned, will be easier and broader, and with more power for good. Her future, as I say, as you say also, is assured; but I want to ask you this," the bishop leaned forward and watched the young man anxiously, "you can protect her in the future, but can you assure me that you can protect her from the past?"

Young Latimer raised his eyes calmly and said, "I don't think I quite understand."

"I have perfect confidence, I say," returned the bishop, "in you as far as your treatment of Ellen is concerned in the future. You love her and you would do everything to make the life of the woman you love a happy one; but this is it, Can you assure me that there is

nothing in the past that may reach forward later and touch my daughter through you—no ugly story, no oats that have been sowed, and no boomerang that you have thrown wantonly and that has not returned—but which may return?"

"I think I understand you now, sir," said the young man, quietly. "I have lived," he began, "as other men of my sort have lived. You know what that is, for you must have seen it about you at college, and after that before you entered the Church. I judge so from your friends, who were your friends then, I understand. You know how they lived. I never went in for dissipation, if you mean that, because it never attracted me. I am afraid I kept out of it not so much out of respect for others as for respect for myself. I found my self-respect was a very good thing to keep, and I rather preferred keeping it and losing several pleasures that other men managed to enjoy, apparently with free consciences. I confess I used to rather envy them. It is no particular virtue on my part; the thing struck me as rather more vulgar than wicked, and so I have had no wild oats to speak of; and no woman, if that is what you mean, can write an anonymous letter, and no man can tell you a story about me that he could not tell in my presence."

There was something in the way the young man spoke which would have amply satisfied the outsider, had he been present; but the bishop's eyes were still unrelaxed and anxious. He made an impatient motion with his hand.

"I know you too well, I hope," he said, "to think of doubting your attitude in that particular. I know you are a gentleman, that is enough for that; but there is something beyond these more common evils. You see, I am terribly in earnest over this—you may think unjustly so, considering how well I know you, but this child is my only child. If her mother had lived, my responsibility would have been less great; but, as it is, God has left her here alone to me in my hands. I do not think He intended my duty should end when I had fed and clothed her, and taught her to read and write. I do not think He meant that I should only act as her guardian until the first man she fancied fancied her. I must look to her happiness not only now when she is with me, but I must assure myself of it when she leaves my roof. These common sins of youth I acquit you of. Such things are beneath you, I believe, and I did not even consider them. But there are other toils in which men become involved, other evils or misfortunes which exist, and which threaten all men who are young and free and attractive in many ways to

women, as well as men. You have lived the life of the young man of this day. You have reached a place in your profession when you can afford to rest and marry and assume the responsibilities of marriage. You look forward to a life of content and peace and honorable ambition—a life, with your wife at your side, which is to last forty or fifty years. You consider where you will be twenty years from now, at what point of your career you may become a judge or give up practise; your perspective is unlimited; you even think of the college to which you may send your son. It is a long, quiet future that you are looking forward to, and you choose my daughter as the companion for that future, as the one woman with whom you could live content for that length of time. And it is in that spirit that you come to me tonight and that you ask me for my daughter. Now I am going to ask you one question, and as you answer that I will tell you whether or not you can have Ellen for your wife. You look forward, as I say, to many years of life, and you have chosen her as best suited to live that period with you; but I ask you this, and I demand that you answer me truthfully, and that you remember that you are speaking to her father. Imagine that I had the power to tell you, or rather that some superhuman

agent could convince you, that you had but a month to live, and that for what you did in that month you would not be held responsible either by any moral law or any law made by man, and that your life hereafter would not be influenced by your conduct in that month, would you spend it, I ask you—and on your answer depends mine—would you spend those thirty days, with death at the end, with my daughter, or with some other woman of whom I know nothing?"

Latimer sat for some time silent, until indeed, his silence assumed such a significance that he raised his head impatiently and said with a motion of the hand, "I mean to answer you in a minute; I want to be sure that I understand."

The bishop bowed his head in assent, and for a still longer period the men sat motionless. The clock in the corner seemed to tick more loudly, and the dead coals dropping in the grate had a sharp, aggressive sound. The notes of the piano that had risen from the room below had ceased.

"If I understand you," said Latimer, finally, and his voice and his face as he raised it were hard and aggressive, "you are stating a purely hypothetical case. You wish to try me by conditions which do not exist, which cannot exist. What justice is there, what right is there, in

asking me to say how I would act under circumstances which are impossible, which lie beyond the limit of human experience? You cannot judge a man by what he would do if he were suddenly robbed of all his mental and moral training and of the habit of years. I am not admitting, understand me, that if the conditions which you suggest did exist that I would do one whit differently from what I will do if they remain as they are. I am merely denying your right to put such a question to me at all. You might just as well judge the shipwrecked sailors on a raft who eat each other's flesh as you would judge a sane, healthy man who did such a thing in his own home. Are you going to condemn men who are ice-locked at the North Pole, or buried in the heart of Africa, and who have given up all thought of return and are half mad and wholly without hope, as you would judge ourselves? Are they to be weighed and balanced as you and I are, sitting here within the sound of the cabs outside and with a bake-shop around the corner? What you propose could not exist, could never happen. I could never be placed where I should have to make such a choice, and you have no right to ask me what I would do or how I would act under conditions that are superhuman—you used the word yourself—where all

that I have held to be good and just and true would be obliterated. I would be unworthy of myself, I would be unworthy of your daughter, if I considered such a state of things for a moment, or if I placed my hopes of marrying her on the outcome of such a test, and so, sir," said the young man, throwing back his head, "I must refuse to answer you."

The bishop lowered his hand from before his eyes and sank back wearily into his chair. "You have answered me," he said.

"You have no right to say that," cried the young man, springing to his feet. "You have no right to suppose anything or to draw any conclusions. I have not answered you." He stood with his head and shoulders thrown back, and with his hands resting on his hips and with the fingers working nervously at his waist.

"What you have said," replied the bishop, in a voice that had changed strangely, and which was inexpressibly sad and gentle, "is merely a curtain of words to cover up your true feeling. It would have been so easy to have said, 'For thirty days or for life Ellen is the only woman who has the power to make me happy.' You see that would have answered me and satisfied me. But you did not say that," he added, quickly, as the young man made a movement as if to speak.

"Well, and suppose this other woman did exist, what then?" demanded Latimer. "The conditions you suggest are impossible; you must, you will surely, sir, admit that."

"I do not know," replied the bishop, sadly; "I do not know. It may happen that whatever obstacle there has been which has kept you from her may be removed. It may be that she has married, it may be that she has fallen so low that you cannot marry her. But if you have loved her once, you may love her again; whatever it was that separated you in the past, that separates you now, that makes you prefer my daughter to her, may come to an end when you are married, when it will be too late, and when only trouble can come of it, and Ellen would bear that trouble. Can I risk that?"

"But I tell you it is impossible," cried the young man. "The woman is beyond the love of any man, at least such a man as I am, or try to be."

"Do you mean," asked the bishop, gently, and with an eager look of hope, "that she is dead?"

Latimer faced the father for some seconds in silence. Then he raised his head slowly. "No," he said, "I do not mean she is dead. No, she is not dead."

Again the bishop moved back wearily into

his chair. "You mean then," he said, "perhaps, that she is a married woman?" Latimer pressed his lips together at first as though he would not answer, and then raised his eyes coldly. "Perhaps," he said.

The older man had held up his hand as if to signify that what he was about to say should be listened to without interruption, when a sharp turning of the lock of the door caused both father and the suitor to start. Then they turned and looked at each other with anxious inquiry and with much concern, for they recognized for the first time that their voices had been loud. The older man stepped quickly across the floor, but before he reached the middle of the room the door opened from the outside, and his daughter stood in the door-way, with her head held down and her eyes looking at the floor.

"Ellen!" exclaimed the father, in a voice of pain and the deepest pity.

The girl moved toward the place from where his voice came, without raising her eyes, and when she reached him put her arms about him and hid her face on his shoulder. She moved as though she were tired, as though she were exhausted by some heavy work.

"My child," said the bishop, gently, "were you listening?" There was no reproach in his

voice; it was simply full of pity and concern.

"I thought," whispered the girl, brokenly, "that he would be frightened; I wanted to hear what he would say. I thought I could laugh at him for it afterward. I did it for a joke. I thought—" She stopped with a little gasping sob that she tried to hide, and for a moment held herself erect and then sank back again into her father's arms with her head upon his breast.

Latimer started forward, holding out his arms to her. "Ellen," he said, "surely, Ellen, you are not against me. You see how preposterous it is, how unjust it is to me. You cannot mean——"

The girl raised her head and shrugged her shoulders slightly as though she were cold. "Father," she said, wearily, "ask him to go away. Why does he stay? Ask him to go away."

Latimer stopped and took a step back as though some one had struck him, and then stood silent with his face flushed and his eyes flashing. It was not in answer to anything that they said that he spoke, but to their attitude and what it suggested. "You stand there," he began, "you two stand there as though I were something unclean, as though

I had committed some crime. You look at me as though I were on trial for murder or worse. Both of you together against me. What have I done? What difference is there? You loved me a half-hour ago, Ellen; you said you did. I know you loved me; and you, sir," he added, more quietly, "treated me like a friend. Has anything come since then to change me or you? Be fair to me, be sensible. What is the use of this? It is a silly, needless, horrible mistake. You know I love you, Ellen; love you better than all the world. I don't have to tell you that; you know it, you can see and feel it. It does not need to be said; words can't make it any truer. You have confused yourselves and stultified yourselves with this trick, this test by hypothetical conditions, by considering what is not real or possible. It is simple enough; it is plain enough. You know I love you, Ellen, and you only, and that is all there is to it, and all that there is of any consequence in the world to me. The matter stops there; that is all there is for you to consider. Answer me, Ellen, speak to me. Tell me that you believe me."

He stopped and moved a step toward her, but as he did so, the girl, still without looking up, drew herself nearer to her father and shrank more closely into his arms; but the father's face

was troubled and doubtful, and he regarded the younger man with a look of the most anxious scrutiny. Latimer did not regard this. Their hands were raised against him as far as he could understand, and he broke forth again proudly, and with a defiant indignation:

"What right have you to judge me?" he began; "what do you know of what I have suffered, and endured, and overcome? How can you know what I have had to give up and put away from me? It's easy enough for you to draw your skirts around you, but what can a woman bred as you have been bred know of what I've had to fight against and keep under and cut away? It was an easy, beautiful idyl to you; your love came to you only when it should have come, and for a man who was good and worthy, and distinctly eligible—I don't mean that; forgive me, Ellen, but you drive me beside myself. But he is good and he believes himself worthy, and I say that myself before you both. But I am only worthy and only good because of that other love that I put away when it became a crime, when it became impossible. Do you know what it cost me? Do you know what it meant to me, and what I went through, and how I suffered? Do you know who this other woman is whom you are insulting with your doubts and guesses in

the dark? Can't you spare her? Am I not enough? Perhaps it was easy for her, too; perhaps her silence cost her nothing; perhaps she did not suffer and has nothing but happiness and content to look forward to for the rest of her life; and I tell you that it is because we did put it away, and kill it, and not give way to it that I am whatever I am to-day; whatever good there is in me is due to that temptation and to the fact that I beat it and overcame it and kept myself honest and clean. And when I met you and learned to know you I believed in my heart that God had sent you to me that I might know what it was to love a woman whom I could marry and who could be my wife; that you were the reward for my having overcome temptation and the sign that I had done well. And now you throw me over and put me aside as though I were something low and unworthy, because of this temptation, because of this very thing that has made me know myself and my own strength and that has kept me up for you."

As the young man had been speaking, the bishop's eyes had never left his face, and as he finished, the face of the priest grew clearer and decided, and calmly exultant. And as Latimer ceased he bent his head above his daughter's, and said in a voice that seemed to

speak with more than human inspiration. "My child," he said, "if God had given me a son I should have been proud if he could have spoken as this young man has done."

But the woman only said, "Let him go to her."

"Ellen, oh, Ellen!" cried the father.

He drew back from the girl in his arms and looked anxiously and feelingly at her lover. "How could you, Ellen," he said, "how could you?" He was watching the young man's face with eyes full of sympathy and concern. "How little you know him," he said, "how little you understand. He will not do that," he added quickly, but looking questioningly at Latimer and speaking in a tone almost of command. "He will not undo all that he has done; I know him better than that. But Latimer made no answer, and for a moment the two men stood watching each other and questioning each other with their eyes. Then Latimer turned, and without again so much as glancing at the girl walked steadily to the door and left the room. He passed on slowly down the stairs and out into the night, and paused upon the top of the steps leading to the street. Below him lay the avenue with its double line of lights stretching off in two long perspectives. The lamps of hundreds of cabs

and carriages flashed as they advanced toward him and shone for a moment at the turnings of the cross-streets, and from either side came the ceaseless rush and murmur, and over all hung the strange mystery that covers a great city at night. Latimer's rooms lay to the south, but he stood looking toward a spot to the north with a reckless, harassed look in his face that had not been there for many months. He stood so for a minute, and then gave a short shrug of disgust at his momentary doubt and ran quickly down the steps. "No," he said, "if it were for a month, yes; but it is to be for many years, many more long years." And turning his back resolutely to the north he went slowly home.

ON THE FEVER SHIP

THERE were four rails around the ship's sides, the three lower ones of iron and the one on top of wood, and as he looked between them from the canvas cot he recognized them as the prison-bars which held him in. Outside his prison lay a stretch of blinding blue water which ended in a line of breakers and a yellow coast with ragged palms. Beyond that again rose a range of mountain-peaks, and, stuck upon the loftiest peak of all, a tiny block-house. It rested on the brow of the mountain against the naked sky as impudently as a cracker-box set upon the dome of a great cathedral.

As the transport rode on her anchor-chains, the iron bars around her sides rose and sank and divided the landscape with parallel lines. From his cot the officer followed this phenomenon with severe, painstaking interest. Sometimes the wooden rail swept up to the very block-house itself, and for a second of time blotted it from sight. And again it sank to the level of the line of breakers, and wiped them out of the picture as though they were a line of chalk.

The soldier on the cot promised himself that the next swell of the sea would send the lowest rail climbing to the very top of the palm-trees or, even higher, to the base of the mountains; and when it failed to reach even the palm-trees he felt a distinct sense of ill use, of having been wronged by some one. There was no other reason for submitting to this existence save these tricks upon the wearisome, glaring landscape; and now, whoever it was who was working them did not seem to be making this effort to entertain him with any heartiness.

It was most cruel. Indeed, he decided hotly, it was not to be endured; he would bear it no longer, he would make his escape. But he knew that this move, which could be conceived in a moment's desperation, could only be carried to success with great strategy, secrecy, and careful cunning. So he fell back upon his pillow and closed his eyes, as though he were asleep, and then opening them again, turned cautiously, and spied upon his keeper. As usual, his keeper sat at the foot of the cot turning the pages of a huge paper filled with pictures of the war printed in daubs of tawdry colors. His keeper was a hard-faced boy without human pity or consideration, a very devil of obstinacy and fiendish cruelty. To make it worse, the fiend was a person without a collar,

in a suit of soiled khaki, with a curious red cross bound by a safety-pin to his left arm. He was intent upon the paper in his hands; he was holding it between his eyes and his prisoner. His vigilance had relaxed, and the moment seemed propitious. With a sudden plunge of arms and legs, the prisoner swept the bed-sheet from him, and sprang at the wooden rail and grasped the iron stanchion beside it. He had his knee pressed against the top bar and his bare toes on the iron rail beneath it. Below him the blue water waited for him. It was cool and dark and gentle and deep. It would certainly put out the fire in his bones, he thought; it might even shut out the glare of the sun which scorched his eyeballs.

But as he balanced for the leap, a swift weakness and nausea swept over him, a weight seized upon his body and limbs. He could not lift the lower foot from the iron rail, and he swayed dizzily and trembled. He trembled. He who had raced his men and beaten them up the hot hill to the trenches of San Juan. But now he was a baby in the hands of a giant, who caught him by the wrist and with an iron arm clasped him around his waist and pulled him down, and shouted, brutally, "Help, some of youse, quick! he's at it again. I can't hold him."

More giants grasped him by the arms and by the legs. One of them took the hand that clung to the stanchion in both of his, and pulled back the fingers one by one, saying, "Easy now, Lieutenant—easy."

The ragged palms and the sea and blockhouse were swallowed up in a black fog, and his body touched the canvas cot again with a sense of home-coming and relief and rest. He wondered how he could have cared to escape from it. He found it so good to be back again that for a long time he wept quite happily, until the fiery pillow was moist and cool.

The world outside of the iron bars was like a scene in a theatre set for some great event, but the actors were never ready. He remembered confusedly a play he had once witnessed before that same scene. Indeed, he believed he had played some small part in it; but he remembered it dimly, and all trace of the men who had appeared with him in it was gone. He had reasoned it out that they were up there behind the range of mountains, because great heavy wagons and ambulances and cannon were emptied from the ships at the wharf above and were drawn away in long lines behind the ragged palms, moving always toward the passes between the peaks. At times he was disturbed by the thought that he should be up and after

them, that some tradition of duty made his presence with them imperative. There was much to be done back of the mountains. Some event of momentous import was being carried forward there, in which he held a part; but the doubt soon passed from him, and he was content to lie and watch the iron bars rising and falling between the block-house and the white surf.

If they had been only humanely kind, his lot would have been bearable, but they starved him and held him down when he wished to rise; and they would not put out the fire in the pillow, which they might easily have done by the simple expedient of throwing it over the ship's side into the sea. He himself had done this twice, but the keeper had immediately brought a fresh pillow already heated for the torture and forced it under his head.

His pleasures were very simple, and so few that he could not understand why they robbed him of them so jealously. One was to watch a green cluster of bananas that hung above him from the awning, twirling on a string. He could count as many of them as five before the bunch turned and swung lazily back again, when he could count as high as twelve; sometimes when the ship rolled heavily he could count to twenty. It was a most fascinating

game, and contented him for many hours. But when they found this out they sent for the cook to come and cut them down, and the cook carried them away to his galley.

Then, one day, a man came out from the shore, swimming through the blue water with great splashes. He was a most charming man, who spluttered and dove and twisted and lay on his back and kicked his legs in an excess of content and delight. It was a real pleasure to watch him; not for days had anything so amusing appeared on the other side of the prison-bars. But as soon as the keeper saw that the man in the water was amusing his prisoner, he leaned over the ship's side and shouted, "Sa-ay, you, don't you know there's skarks in there?"

And the swimming man said, "The h—ll there is!" and raced back to the shore like a porpoise with great lashing of the water, and ran up the beach half-way to the palms before he was satisfied to stop. Then the prisoner wept again. It was so disappointing. Life was robbed of everything now. He remembered that in a previous existence soldiers who cried were laughed at and mocked. But that was so far away and it was such an absurd superstition that he had no patience with it. For what could be more comforting to a man

when he is treated cruelly than to cry. It was so obvious an exercise, and when one is so feeble that one cannot vault a four-railed barrier it is something to feel that at least one is strong enough to cry.

He escaped occasionally, traversing space with marvellous rapidity and to great distances, but never to any successful purpose; and his flight inevitably ended in ignominious recapture and a sudden awakening in bed. At these moments the familiar and hated palms, the peaks, and the block-house were more hideous in their reality than the most terrifying of his nightmares.

These excursions afield were always predatory; he went forth always to seek food. With all the beautiful world from which to elect and choose, he sought out only those places where eating was studied and elevated to an art. These visits were much more vivid in their detail than any he had ever before made to these same resorts. They invariably began in a carriage, which carried him swiftly over smooth asphalt. One route brought him across a great and beautiful square, radiating with rows and rows of flickering lights; two fountains splashed in the centre of the square, and six women of stone guarded its approaches. One of the women was hung with wreaths of

mourning. Ahead of him the late twilight darkened behind a great arch, which seemed to rise on the horizon of the world, a great window into the heavens beyond. At either side strings of white and colored globes hung among the trees, and the sound of music came joyfully from theatres in the open air. He knew the restaurant under the trees to which he was now hastening, and the fountain beside it, and the very sparrows balancing on the fountain's edge; he knew every waiter at each of the tables, he felt again the gravel crunching under his feet, he saw the *maître d'hôtel* coming forward smiling to receive his command, and the waiter in the green apron bowing at his elbow, deferential and important, presenting the list of wines. But his adventure never passed that point, for he was captured again and once more bound to his cot with a close burning sheet.

Or else, he drove more sedately through the London streets in the late evening twilight, leaning expectantly across the doors of the hansom and pulling carefully at his white gloves. Other hansoms flashed past him, the occupant of each with his mind fixed on one idea—dinner. He was one of a million of people who were about to dine, or who had dined, or who were deep in dining. He was so famished, so weak for food of any quality, that

the galloping horse in the hansom seemed to crawl. The lights of the Embankment passed like the lamps of a railroad station as seen from the window of an express; and while his mind was still torn between the choice of a thin or thick soup or an immediate attack upon cold beef, he was at the door, and the *chasseur* touched his cap, and the little *chasseur* put the wicker guard over the hansom's wheel. As he jumped out he said, "Give him half-a-crown," and the driver called after him, "Thank you, sir."

It was a beautiful world, this world outside of the iron bars. Every one in it contributed to his pleasure and to his comfort. In this world he was not starved nor man-handled. He thought of this joyfully as he leaped up the stairs, where young men with grave faces and with their hands held negligently behind their backs bowed to him in polite surprise at his speed. But they had not been starved on condensed milk. He threw his coat and hat at one of them, and came down the hall fearfully and quite weak with dread lest it should not be real. His voice was shaking when he asked Ellis if he had reserved a table. The place was all so real, it must be true this time. The way Ellis turned and ran his finger down the list showed it was real, because Ellis always did that, even when he knew there would not be

an empty table for an hour. The room was crowded with beautiful women; under the light of the red shades they looked kind and approachable, and there was food on every table, and iced drinks in silver buckets. It was with the joy of great relief that he heard Ellis say to his underling, "Numéro cinq, sur la terrace, un couvert." It was real at last. Outside, the Thames lay a great gray shadow. The lights of the Embankment flashed and twinkled across it, the tower of the House of Commons rose against the sky, and here, inside, the waiter was hurrying toward him carrying a smoking plate of rich soup with a pungent, intoxicating odor.

And then the ragged palms, the glaring sun, the immovable peaks, and the white surf stood again before him. The iron rails swept up and sank again, the fever sucked at his bones, and the pillow scorched his cheek.

One morning for a brief moment he came back to real life again and lay quite still, seeing everything about him with clear eyes and for the first time, as though he had but just that instant been lifted over the ship's side. His keeper, glancing up, found the prisoner's eyes considering him curiously, and recognized the change. The instinct of discipline brought him to his feet with his fingers at his sides.

"Is the Lieutenant feeling better?"

The Lieutenant surveyed him gravely.

"You are one of our hospital stewards."

"Yes, Lieutenant."

"Why ar'n't you with the regiment?"

"I was wounded, too, sir. I got it same time you did, Lieutenant."

"Am I wounded? Of course, I remember. Is this a hospital ship?"

The steward shrugged his shoulders. "She's one of the transports. They have turned her over to the fever cases."

The Lieutenant opened his lips to ask another question; but his own body answered that one, and for a moment he lay silent.

"Do they know up North that I—that I'm all right?"

"Oh, yes, the papers had it in—there was pictures of the Lieutenant in some of them."

"Then I've been ill some time?"

"Oh, about eight days."

The soldier moved uneasily, and the nurse in him became uppermost.

"I guess the Lieutenant hadn't better talk any more," he said. It was his voice now which held authority.

The Lieutenant looked out at the palms and the silent gloomy mountains and the empty coast-line, where the same wave was rising and falling with weary persistence.

"Eight days," he said. His eyes shut quickly, as though with a sudden touch of pain. He turned his head and sought for the figure at the foot of the cot. Already the figure had grown faint and was receding and swaying.

"Has any one written or cabled?" the Lieutenant spoke, hurriedly. He was fearful lest the figure should disappear altogether before he could obtain his answer. "Has any one come?"

"Why, they couldn't get here, Lieutenant, not yet."

The voice came very faintly. "You go to sleep now, and I'll run and fetch some letters and telegrams. When you wake up, maybe I'll have a lot for you."

But the Lieutenant caught the nurse by the wrist, and crushed his hand in his own thin fingers. They were hot, and left the steward's skin wet with perspiration. The Lieutenant laughed gayly.

"You see, Doctor," he said, briskly, "that you can't kill me. I can't die. I've got to live, you understand. Because, sir, she said she would come. She said if I was wounded, or if I was ill, she would come to me. She didn't care what people thought. She would come anyway and nurse me—well, she will come.

"So, Doctor—old man—" He plucked at the steward's sleeve, and stroked his hand

eagerly, "old man—" he began again, beseechingly, "you'll not let me die until she comes, will you? What? No, I know I won't die. Nothing made by man can kill me. No, not until she comes. Then, after that—eight days, she'll be here soon, any moment? What? You think so, too? Don't you? Surely, yes, any moment. Yes, I'll go to sleep now, and when you see her rowing out from shore you wake me. You'll know her; you can't make a mistake. She is like—no, there is no one like her—but you can't make a mistake."

That day strange figures began to mount the sides of the ship, and to occupy its every turn and angle of space. Some of them fell on their knees and slapped the bare decks with their hands, and laughed and cried out, "Thank God, I'll see God's country again!" Some of them were regulars, bound in bandages; some were volunteers, dirty and hollow-eyed, with long beards on boy's faces. Some came on crutches; others with their arms around the shoulders of their comrades, staring ahead of them with a fixed smile, their lips drawn back and their teeth protruding. At every second step they stumbled, and the face of each was swept by swift ripples of pain.

They lay on cots so close together that the nurses could not walk between them. They

lay on the wet decks, in the scuppers, and along the transoms and hatches. They were like shipwrecked mariners clinging to a raft, and they asked nothing more than that the ship's bow be turned toward home. Once satisfied as to that, they relaxed into a state of self-pity and miserable oblivion to their environment, from which hunger nor nausea nor aching bones could shake them.

The hospital steward touched the Lieutenant lightly on the shoulder.

"We are going North, sir," he said. "The transport's ordered North to New York, with these volunteers and the sick and wounded. Do you hear me, sir?"

The Lieutenant opened his eyes. "Has she come?" he asked.

"Gee!" exclaimed the hospital steward. He glanced impatiently at the blue mountains and the yellow coast, from which the transport was drawing rapidly away.

"Well, I can't see her coming just now," he said. "But she will," he added.

"You let me know at once when she comes."

"Why, cert'nly, of course," said the steward.

Three trained nurses came over the side just before the transport started North. One was a large, motherly looking woman, with a German accent. She had been a trained nurse,

first in Berlin, and later in the London Hospital in Whitechapel, and at Bellevue. The nurse was dressed in white, and wore a little silver medal at her throat; and she was strong enough to lift a volunteer out of his cot and hold him easily in her arms, while one of the convalescents pulled his cot out of the rain. Some of the men called her "nurse"; others, who wore scapulars around their necks, called her "Sister"; and the officers of the medical staff addressed her as Miss Bergen.

Miss Bergen halted beside the cot of the Lieutenant and asked, "Is this the fever case you spoke about, Doctor—the one you want moved to the officers' ward?" She slipped her hand up under his sleeve and felt his wrist.

"His pulse is very high," she said to the steward. "When did you take his temperature?" She drew a little morocco case from her pocket and from that took a clinical thermometer, which she shook up and down, eying the patient meanwhile with a calm, impersonal scrutiny. The Lieutenant raised his head and stared up at the white figure beside his cot. His eyes opened and then shut quickly, with a startled look, in which doubt struggled with wonderful happiness. His hand stole out fearfully and warily until it touched her apron, and then, finding it was real, he clutched it desperately,

and twisting his face and body toward her, pulled her down, clasping her hands in both of his, and pressing them close to his face and eyes and lips. He put them from him for an instant, and looked at her through his tears.

"Sweetheart," he whispered, "sweetheart, I knew you'd come."

As the nurse knelt on the deck beside him, her thermometer slipped from her fingers and broke, and she gave an exclamation of annoyance. The young Doctor picked up the pieces and tossed them overboard. Neither of them spoke, but they smiled appreciatively. The Lieutenant was looking at the nurse with the wonder and hope and hunger of soul in his eyes with which a dying man looks at the cross the priest holds up before him. What he saw where the German nurse was kneeling was a tall, fair girl with great bands and masses of hair, with a head rising like a lily from a firm, white throat, set on broad shoulders above a straight back and sloping breast—a tall, beautiful creature, half-girl, half-woman, who looked back at him shyly, but steadily.

"Listen," he said.

The voice of the sick man was so sure and so sane that the young Doctor started, and moved nearer to the head of the cot. "Listen, dearest," the Lieutenant whispered. "I wanted to tell

you before I came South. But I did not dare; and then I was afraid something might happen to me, and I could never tell you, and you would never know. So I wrote it to you in the will I made at Baiquiri, the night before the landing. If you hadn't come now, you would have learned it in that way. You would have read there that there never was any one but you; the rest were all dream people, foolish, silly—mad. There is no one else in the world but you; you have been the only thing in life that has counted. I thought I might do something down here that would make you care. But I got shot going up a hill, and after that I wasn't able to do anything. It was very hot, and the hills were on fire; and they took me prisoner, and kept me tied down here, burning on these coals. I can't live much longer, but now that I have told you I can have peace. They tried to kill me before you came; but they didn't know I loved you, they didn't know that men who love you can't die. They tried to starve my love for you, to burn it out of me; they tried to reach it with their knives. But my love for you is my soul, and they can't kill a man's soul. Dear heart, I have lived because you lived. Now that you know—now that you understand—what does it matter?"

Miss Bergen shook her head with great

vigor. "Nonsense," she said, cheerfully. "You are not going to die. As soon as we move you out of this rain, and some food cook——"

"Good God!" cried the young Doctor, savagely. "Do you want to kill him?"

When she spoke, the patient had thrown his arms heavily across his face, and had fallen back, lying rigid on the pillow.

The Doctor led the way across the prostrate bodies, apologizing as he went. "I am sorry I spoke so quickly," he said, "but he thought you were real. I mean he thought you were some one he really knew——"

"He was just delirious," said the German nurse, calmly.

The Doctor mixed himself a Scotch and soda and drank it with a single gesture.

"Ugh!" he said to the ward-room. "I feel as though I'd been opening another man's letters."

The transport drove through the empty seas with heavy, clumsy upheavals, rolling like a buoy. Having been originally intended for the freight-carrying trade, she had no sympathy with hearts that beat for a sight of their native land, or for lives that counted their remaining minutes by the throbbing of her engines. Occasionally, without apparent reason, she was thrown violently from her course; but it was

invariably the case that when her stern went to starboard, something splashed in the water on her port side and drifted past her, until, when it had cleared the blades of her propeller, a voice cried out, and she was swung back on her home-bound track again.

The Lieutenant missed the familiar palms and the tiny block-house; and seeing nothing beyond the iron rails but great wastes of gray water, he decided he was on board a prison-ship, or that he had been strapped to a raft and cast adrift. People came for hours at a time and stood at the foot of his cot, and talked with him and he to them—people he had loved and people he had long forgotten, some of whom he had thought were dead. One of them he could have sworn he had seen buried in a deep trench, and covered with branches of palmetto. He had heard the bugler, with tears choking him, sound "taps"; and with his own hand he had placed the dead man's campaign hat on the mound of fresh earth above the grave. Yet here he was still alive, and he came with other men of his troop to speak to him; but when he reached out to them they were gone—the real and the unreal, the dead and the living—and even She disappeared whenever he tried to take her hand, and sometimes the hospital steward drove her away.

"Did that young lady say when she was coming back again?" he asked the steward.

"The young lady! What young lady?" asked the steward, wearily.

"The one who has been sitting there," he answered. He pointed with his gaunt hand at the man in the next cot.

"Oh, that young lady. Yes, she's coming back. She's just gone below to fetch you some hardtack."

The young volunteer in the next cot whined grievously.

"That crazy man gives me the creeps," he groaned. "He's always waking me up, and looking at me as though he was going to eat me."

"Shut your head," said the steward. "He's a better crazy man than you'll ever be with the little sense you've got. And he has two Mauser holes in him. Crazy, eh? It's a damned good thing for you that there was about four thousand of us regulars just as crazy as him, or you'd never seen the top of the hill."

One morning there was a great commotion on deck, and all the convalescents balanced themselves on the rail, shivering in their pajamas, and pointed one way. The transport was moving swiftly and smoothly through water as flat as a lake, and making a great noise with

her steam-whistle. The noise was echoed by many more steam-whistles; and the ghosts of out-bound ships and tugs and excursion steamers ran past her out of the mist and disappeared, saluting joyously. All of the excursion steamers had a heavy list to the side nearest the transport, and the ghosts on them crowded to that rail and waved handkerchiefs and cheered. The fog lifted suddenly, and between the iron rails the Lieutenant saw high green hills on either side of a great harbor. Houses and trees and thousands of masts swept past like a panorama; and beyond was a mirage of three cities, with curling smoke-wreaths and sky-reaching buildings, and a great swinging bridge, and a giant statue of a woman waving a welcome home.

The Lieutenant surveyed the spectacle with cynical disbelief. He was far too wise and far too cunning to be bewitched by it. In his heart he pitied the men about him, who laughed wildly, and shouted, and climbed recklessly to the rails and ratlines. He had been deceived too often not to know that it was not real. He knew from cruel experience that in a few moments the tall buildings would crumble away, the thousands of columns of white smoke that flashed like snow in the sun, the busy, shrieking tug-boats, and the great statue would vanish

into the sea, leaving it gray and bare. He closed his eyes and shut the vision out. It was so beautiful that it tempted him; but he would not be mocked, and he buried his face in his hands. They were carrying the farce too far, he thought. It was really too absurd; for now they were at a wharf which was so real that, had he not known by previous suffering, he would have been utterly deceived by it. And there were great crowds of smiling, cheering people, and a waiting guard of honor in fresh uniforms, and rows of police pushing the people this way and that; and these men about him were taking it all quite seriously, and making ready to disembark, carrying their blanket-rolls and rifles with them.

A band was playing joyously, and the man in the next cot, who was being lifted to a stretcher, said, "There's the Governor and his staff; that's him in the high hat." It was really very well done. The Custom-House and the Elevated Railroad and Castle Garden were as like to life as a photograph, and the crowd was as well handled as a mob in a play. His heart ached for it so that he could not bear the pain, and he turned his back on it. It was cruel to keep it up so long. His keeper lifted him in his arms, and pulled him into a dirty uniform which had belonged, apparently, to a much

larger man—a man who had been killed probably, for there were dark brown marks of blood on the tunic and breeches. When he tried to stand on his feet, Castle Garden and the Battery disappeared in a black cloud of night, just as he knew they would; but when he opened his eyes from the stretcher, they had returned again. It was a most remarkably vivid vision. They kept it up so well. Now the young Doctor and the hospital steward were pretending to carry him down a gangplank and into an open space; and he saw quite close to him a long line policemen, and behind them thousands of faces, some of them women's faces—women who pointed at him and then shook their heads and cried, and pressed their hands to their cheeks, still looking at him. He wondered why they cried. He did not know them, nor did they know him. No one knew him; these people were only ghosts.

There was a quick parting in the crowd. A man he had once known shoved two of the policemen to one side, and he heard a girl's voice speaking his name, like a sob; and She came running out across the open space and fell on her knees beside the stretcher, and bent down over him, and he was clasped in two young, firm arms.

"Of course it is not real, of course it is not

She," he assured himself. "Because She would not do such a thing. Before all these people She would not do it."

But he trembled and his heart throbbed so cruelly that he could not bear the pain.

She was pretending to cry.

"They wired us you had started for Tampa on the hospital ship," She was saying, "and Aunt and I went all the way there before we heard you had been sent North. We have been on the cars a week. That is why I missed you. Do you understand? It was not my fault. I tried to come. Indeed, I tried to come."

She turned her head and looked up fearfully at the young Doctor.

"Tell me, why does he look at me like that?" she asked. "He doesn't know me. Is he very ill? Tell me the truth." She drew in her breath quickly. "Of course you will tell me the truth."

When she asked the question he felt her arms draw tight about his shoulders. It was as though she was holding him to herself, and from some one who had reached out for him. In his trouble he turned to his old friend and keeper. His voice was hoarse and very low.

"Is this the same young lady who was on the transport—the one you used to drive away?"

In his embarrassment, the hospital steward blushed under his tan, and stammered.

"Of course it's the same young lady," the Doctor answered, briskly. "And I won't let them drive her away." He turned to her, smiling gravely. "I think his condition has ceased to be dangerous, madam," he said.

People who in a former existence had been his friends, and Her brother, gathered about his stretcher and bore him through the crowd and lifted him into a carriage filled with cushions, among which he sank lower and lower. Then She sat beside him, and he heard Her brother say to the coachman, "Home, and drive slowly and keep on the asphalt."

The carriage moved forward, and She put her arm about him, and his head fell on her shoulder, and neither of them spoke. The vision had lasted so long now that he was torn with the joy that after all it might be real. But he could not bear the awakening if it were not, so he raised his head fearfully and looked up into the beautiful eyes above him. His brows were knit, and he struggled with a great doubt and an awful joy.

"Dearest," he said, "is it real?"

"Is it real?" she repeated.

Even as a dream, it was so wonderfully beau-

tiful that he was satisfied if it could only continue so, if but for a little while.

"Do you think," he begged again, trembling, "that it is going to last much longer?"

She smiled, and, bending her head slowly, kissed him.

"It is going to last—always," she said.

THE LION AND THE UNICORN

PRENTISS had a long lease on the house, and because it stood in Jermyn Street the upper floors were, as a matter of course, turned into lodgings for single gentlemen; and because Prentiss was a Florist to the Queen, he placed a lion and unicorn over his flower-shop, just in front of the middle window on the first floor. By stretching a little, each of them could see into the window just beyond him, and could hear all that was said inside; and such things as they saw and heard during the reign of Captain Carrington, who moved in at the same time they did! By day the table in the centre of the room was covered with maps, and the Captain sat with a box of pins, with different-colored flags wrapped around them, and amused himself by sticking them in the maps and measuring the spaces in between, swearing meanwhile to himself. It was a selfish amusement, but it appeared to be the Captain's only intellectual pursuit, for at night the maps were rolled up, and a green cloth was spread across the table, and there was much company and popping of soda-bottles, and little heaps of gold and silver

were moved this way and that across the cloth. The smoke drifted out of the open windows, and the laughter of the Captain's guests rang out loudly in the empty street, so that the policeman halted and raised his eyes reprovingly to the lighted windows, and cabmen drew up beneath them and lay in wait, dozing on their folded arms, for the Captain's guests to depart. The Lion and the Unicorn were rather ashamed of the scandal of it, and they were glad when, one day, the Captain went away with his tin boxes and gun-cases piled high on a four-wheeler.

Prentiss stood on the sidewalk and said, "I wish you good luck, sir." And the Captain said, "I'm coming back a Major, Prentiss." But he never came back. And one day—the Lion remembered the day very well, for on that same day the newsboys ran up and down Jermyn Street shouting out the news of "a 'orrible disaster" to the British arms. It was then that a young lady came to the door in a hansom, and Prentiss went out to meet her and led her up-stairs. They heard him unlock the Captain's door and say, "This is his room, miss," and after he had gone they watched her standing quite still by the centre-table. She stood there a very long time looking slowly about her, and then she took a photograph of the Captain from the frame on the mantel and

slipped it into her pocket, and when she went out again her veil was down, and she was crying. She must have given Prentiss as much as a sovereign, for he called her "Your ladyship," which he never did under a sovereign.

And she drove off, and they never saw her again either, nor could they hear the address she gave the cabman. But it was somewhere up St. John's Wood way.

After that the rooms were empty for some months, and the Lion and the Unicorn were forced to amuse themselves with the beautiful ladies and smart-looking men who came to Prentiss to buy flowers and "buttonholes," and the little round baskets of strawberries, and even the peaches at three shillings each, which looked so tempting as they lay in the window, wrapped up in cotton-wool, like jewels of great price.

Then Philip Carroll, the American gentleman, came, and they heard Prentiss telling him that those rooms had always let for five guineas a week, which they knew was not true; but they also knew that in the economy of nations there must always be a higher price for the rich American, or else why was he given that strange accent, except to betray him into the hands of the London shopkeeper, and the London cabby?

The American walked to the window toward

the west, which was the window nearest the Lion, and looked out into the graveyard of St. James's Church, that stretched between their street and Piccadilly.

"You're lucky in having a bit of green to look out on," he said to Prentiss. "I'll take these rooms—at five guineas. That's more than they're worth, you know, but as I know it, too, your conscience needn't trouble you."

Then his eyes fell on the Lion, and he nodded to him gravely. "How do you do?" he said. "I'm coming to live with you for a little time. I have read about you and your friends over there. It is a hazard of new fortunes with me, your Majesty, so be kind to me, and if I win, I will put a new coat of paint on your shield and gild you all over again."

Prentiss smiled obsequiously at the American's pleasantry, but the new lodger only stared at him.

"He seemed a social gentleman," said the Unicorn, that night, when the Lion and he were talking it over. "Now the Captain, the whole time he was here, never gave us so much as a look. This one says he has read of us."

"And why not?" growled the Lion. "I hope Prentiss heard what he said of our needing a new layer of gilt. It's disgraceful. You can see that Lion over Scarlett's, the butcher, as

far as Regent Street, and Scarlett is only one of Salisbury's creations. He received his Letters-Patent only two years back. We date from Palmerston."

The lodger came up the street just at that moment, and stopped and looked up at the Lion and the Unicorn from the sidewalk, before he opened the door with his night-key. They heard him enter the room and feel on the mantel for his pipe, and a moment later he appeared at the Lion's window and leaned on the sill, looking down into the street below and blowing whiffs of smoke up into the warm night-air.

It was a night in June, and the pavements were dry under foot and the streets were filled with well-dressed people, going home from the play, and with groups of men in black and white, making their way to supper at the clubs. Hansoms of inky-black, with shining lamps inside and out, dashed noiselessly past on mysterious errands, chasing close on each other's heels on a mad race, each to its separate goal. From the cross streets rose the noises of early night, the rumble of the 'buses, the creaking of their brakes as they unlocked, the cries of the "extras," and the merging of thousands of human voices in a dull murmur. The great world of London was closing its shutters for the night and putting out the lights; and the

new lodger from across the sea listened to it with his heart beating quickly, and laughed to stifle the touch of fear and homesickness that rose in him.

"I have seen a great play to-night," he said to the Lion, "nobly played by great players. What will they care for my poor wares? I see that I have been over-bold. But we cannot go back now—not yet."

He knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and nodded "good-night" to the great world beyond his window. "What fortunes lie with ye, ye lights of London town?" he quoted, smiling. And they heard him close the door of his bedroom, and lock it for the night.

The next morning he bought many geraniums from Prentiss and placed them along the broad cornice that stretched across the front of the house over the shop-window. The flowers made a band of scarlet on either side of the Lion as brilliant as a Tommy's jacket.

"I am trying to propitiate the British Lion by placing flowers before his altar," the American said that morning to a visitor.

"The British public, you mean," said the visitor; "they are each likely to tear you to pieces."

"Yes, I have heard that the pit on the first night of a bad play is something awful," hazarded the American.

"Wait and see," said the visitor.

"Thank you," said the American, meekly.

Every one who came to the first floor front talked about a play. It seemed to be something of great moment to the American. It was only a bundle of leaves printed in red and black inks and bound in brown paper covers. There were two of them, and the American called them by different names: one was his comedy and one was his tragedy.

"They are both likely to be tragedies," the Lion heard one of the visitors say to another, as they drove away together. "Our young friend takes it too seriously."

The American spent most of his time by his desk at the window writing on little blue pads and tearing up what he wrote, or in reading over one of the plays to himself in a loud voice. In time the number of his visitors increased, and to some of these he would read his play; and after they had left him he was either depressed and silent or excited and jubilant. The Lion could always tell when he was happy because then he would go to the side table and pour himself out a drink and say, "Here's to me," but when he was depressed he would stand holding the glass in his hand, and finally pour the liquor back into the bottle again and say, "What's the use of that?"

After he had been in London a month he wrote less and was more frequently abroad, sallying forth in beautiful raiment, and coming home by daylight.

And he gave suppers, too, but they were less noisy than the Captain's had been, and the women who came to them were much more beautiful, and their voices when they spoke were sweet and low. Sometimes one of the women sang, and the men sat in silence while the people in the street below stopped to listen, and would say, "Why, that is So-and-So singing," and the Lion and the Unicorn wondered how they could know who it was when they could not see her.

The lodger's visitors came to see him at all hours. They seemed to regard his rooms as a club, where they could always come for a bite to eat or to write notes; and others treated it like a lawyer's office and asked advice on all manner of strange subjects. Sometimes the visitor wanted to know whether the American thought she ought to take £10 a week and go on tour, or stay in town and try to live on £8; or whether she should paint landscapes that would not sell, or race-horses that would; or whether Reggie really loved her and whether she really loved Reggie; or whether the new part in the piece at the Court was better than

the old part at Terry's, and wasn't she getting too old to play "ingénues" anyway.

The lodger seemed to be a general adviser, and smoked and listened with grave consideration, and the Unicorn thought his judgment was most sympathetic and sensible.

Of all the beautiful ladies who came to call on the lodger the one the Unicorn liked the best was the one who wanted to know whether she loved Reggie and whether Reggie loved her. She discussed this so interestingly while she consumed tea and thin slices of bread that the Unicorn almost lost his balance in leaning forward to listen. Her name was Marion Cavendish, and it was written over many photographs which stood in silver frames in the lodger's rooms. She used to make the tea herself, while the lodger sat and smoked; and she had a fascinating way of doubling the thin slices of bread into long strips and nibbling at them like a mouse at a piece of cheese. She had wonderful little teeth and Cupid's-bow lips, and she had a fashion of lifting her veil only high enough for one to see the two Cupid's-bow lips. When she did that the American used to laugh, at nothing apparently, and say, "Oh, I guess Reggie loves you well enough."

"But do I love Reggie?" she would ask, sadly, with her teacup held poised in air.

Consumed tea and thin slices of bread.

"I am sure I hope not," the lodger would reply, and she would put down the veil quickly, as one would drop a curtain over a beautiful picture, and rise with great dignity and say, "If you talk like that I shall not come again."

She was sure that if she could only get some work to do her head would be filled with more important matters than whether Reggie loved her or not.

"But the managers seem inclined to cut their cavendish very fine just at present," she said. "If I don't get a part soon," she announced, "I shall ask Mitchell to put me down on the list for recitations at evening parties."

"That seems a desperate revenge," said the American; "and besides, I don't want you to get a part, because some one might be idiotic enough to take my comedy, and if he should, you must play *Nancy*."

"I would not ask for any salary if I could play *Nancy*," Miss Cavendish answered.

They spoke of a great many things, but their talk always ended by her saying that there must be some one with sufficient sense to see that his play was a great play, and by his saying that none but she must play *Nancy*.

The Lion preferred the tall girl with masses and folds of brown hair, who came from America to paint miniatures of the British aristocracy.

Her name was Helen Cabot, and he liked her because she was so brave and fearless, and so determined to be independent of every one, even of the lodger—especially of the lodger, who, it appeared, had known her very well at home. The lodger, they gathered, did not wish her to be independent of him, and the two Americans had many arguments and disputes about it, but she always said, "It does no good, Philip; it only hurts us both when you talk so. I care for nothing, and for no one but my art, and, poor as it is, it means everything to me, and you do not, and, of course, the man I am to marry must." Then Carroll would talk, walking up and down, and looking very fierce and determined, and telling her how he loved her in such a way that it made her look even more proud and beautiful. And she would say more gently, "It is very fine to think that any one can care for me like that, and very helpful. But unless I cared in the same way it would be wicked of me to marry you, and besides—" She would add very quickly to prevent his speaking again—"I don't want to marry you or anybody, and I never shall. I want to be free and to succeed in my work, just as you want to succeed in your work. So please never speak of this again." When she went away the lodger used to sit smoking in the big

arm-chair and beat the arms with his hands, and he would pace up and down the room, while his work would lie untouched and his engagements pass forgotten.

Summer came and London was deserted, dull, and dusty, but the lodger stayed on in Jermyn Street. Helen Cabot had departed on a round of visits to country-houses in Scotland, where, as she wrote him, she was painting miniatures of her hosts and studying the game of golf. Miss Cavendish divided her days between the river and one of the West End theatres. She was playing a small part in a farce-comedy.

One day she came up from Cookham earlier than usual, looking very beautiful in a white boating-frock and a straw hat with a Leander ribbon. Her hands and arms were hard with dragging a punting-hole, and she was sunburnt and happy, and hungry for tea.

"Why don't you come down to Cookham and get out of this heat?" Miss Cavendish asked. "You need it; you look ill."

"I'd like to, but I can't," said Carroll. "The fact is, I paid in advance for these rooms, and if I lived anywhere else I'd be losing five guineas a week on them."

Miss Cavendish regarded him severely. She had never quite mastered his American humor.

"But—five guineas—why, that's nothing to you," she said. Something in the lodger's face made her pause. "You don't mean——"

"Yes, I do," said the lodger, smiling. "You see, I started in to lay siege to London without sufficient ammunition. London is a large town, and it didn't fall as quickly as I thought it would. So I am economizing. Mr. Lockhart's Coffee Rooms and I are no longer strangers."

Miss Cavendish put down her cup of tea untasted and leaned toward him.

"Are you in earnest?" she asked. "For how long?"

"Oh, for the last month," replied the lodger; "they are not at all bad—clean and wholesome and all that."

"But the suppers you gave us, and this," she cried, suddenly, waving her hands over the pretty tea-things, "and the cake and muffins?"

"My friends, at least," said Carroll, "need not go to Lockhart's."

"And the Savoy?" asked Miss Cavendish, mournfully shaking her head.

"A dream of the past," said Carroll, waving his pipe through the smoke. "Gatti's? Yes, on special occasions; but for necessity the Chancellor's, where one gets a piece of the prime roast beef of Old England, from Chicago, and potatoes for ninepence—a pot of

bitter twopence-halfpenny, and a penny for the waiter. It's most amusing on the whole. I am learning a little about London, and some things about myself. They are both most interesting subjects."

"Well, I don't like it," Miss Cavendish declared, helplessly. "When I think of those suppers and the flowers, I feel—I feel like a robber."

"Don't," begged Carroll. "I am really the most happy of men—that is, as the chap says in the play, I would be if I wasn't so damned miserable. But I owe no man a penny and I have assets—I have £80 to last me through the winter and two marvellous plays; and I love, next to yourself, the most wonderful woman God ever made. That's enough."

"But I thought you made such a lot of money by writing?" asked Miss Cavendish.

"I do—that is, I could," answered Carroll, "if I wrote the things that sell; but I keep on writing plays that won't."

"And such plays!" exclaimed Marion, warmly; "and to think that they are going begging!" She continued, indignantly, "I can't imagine what the managers do want."

"I know what they don't want," said the American. Miss Cavendish drummed impatiently on the tea-tray.

"I wish you wouldn't be so abject about it,"

she said. "If I were a man I'd make them take those plays."

"How?" asked the American; "with a gun?"

"Well, I'd keep at it until they read them," declared Marion. "I'd sit on their front steps all night and I'd follow them in cabs, and I'd lie in wait for them at the stage-door. I'd just make them take them."

Carroll sighed and stared at the ceiling. "I guess I'll give up and go home," he said.

"Oh, yes, do, run away before you are beaten," said Miss Cavendish, scornfully. "Why, you can't go now. Everybody will be back in town soon, and there are a lot of new plays coming on, and some of them are sure to be failures, and that's our chance. You rush in with your piece, and somebody may take it sooner than close the theatre."

"I'm thinking of closing the theatre myself," said Carroll. "What's the use of my hanging on here?" he exclaimed. "It distresses Helen to know I am in London, feeling about her as I do—and the Lord only knows how it distresses me. And, maybe, if I went away," he said, consciously, "she might miss me. She might see the difference."

Miss Cavendish held herself erect and pressed her lips together with a severe smile. "If Helen Cabot doesn't see the difference between

you and the other men she knows now," she said, "I doubt if she ever will. Besides—" she continued, and then hesitated.

"Well, go on," urged Carroll.

"Well, I was only going to say," she explained, "that leaving the girl alone never did the man any good unless he left her alone willingly. If she's sure he still cares, it's just the same to her where he is. He might as well stay on in London as go to South Africa. It won't help him any. The difference comes when she finds he has stopped caring. Why, look at Reggie. He tried that. He went away for ever so long, but he kept writing me from wherever he went, so that he was perfectly miserable—and I went on enjoying myself. Then when he came back, he tried going about with his old friends again. He used to come to the theatre with them—oh, with such nice girls!—but he always stood in the back of the box and yawned and scowled —so I knew. And, anyway, he'd always spoil it all by leaving them and waiting at the stage entrance for me. But one day he got tired of the way I treated him and went off on a bicycle-tour with Lady Hacksher's girls and some men from his regiment, and he was gone three weeks, and never sent me even a line; and I got so scared; I couldn't sleep, and I stood it for three days more, and then I wired him to come back

or I'd jump off London Bridge; and he came back that very night from Edinburgh on the express, and I was so glad to see him that I got confused, and in the general excitement I promised to marry him, so that's how it was with us."

"Yes," said the American, without enthusiasm; "but then I still care, and Helen knows I care."

"Doesn't she ever fancy that you might care for some one else? You have a lot of friends, you know."

"Yes, but she knows they are just that—friends," said the American.

Miss Cavendish stood up to go, and arranged her veil before the mirror above the fireplace.

"I come here very often to tea," she said.

"It's very kind of you," said Carroll. He was at the open window, looking down into the street for a cab.

"Well, no one knows I am engaged to Reggie," continued Miss Cavendish, "except you and Reggie, and he isn't so sure. *She* doesn't know it."

"Well?" said Carroll.

Miss Cavendish smiled a mischievous, kindly smile at him from the mirror.

"Well?" she repeated, mockingly. Carroll stared at her and laughed. After a pause he

said: "It's like a plot in a comedy. But I'm afraid I'm too serious for play-acting."

"Yes, it is serious," said Miss Cavendish. She seated herself again and regarded the American thoughtfully. "You are too good a man to be treated the way that girl is treating you, and no one knows it better than she does. She'll change in time, but just now she thinks she wants to be independent. She's in love with this picture-painting idea, and with the people she meets. It's all new to her—the fuss they make over her and the titles, and the way she is asked about. We know she can't paint. We know they only give her commissions because she's so young and pretty, and American. She amuses them, that's all. Well, that cannot last; she'll find it out. She's too clever a girl, and she is too fine a girl to be content with that long. Then—then she'll come back to you. She feels now that she has both you and the others, and she's making you wait; so wait and be cheerful. She's worth waiting for; she's young, that's all. She'll see the difference in time. But, in the meanwhile, it would hurry matters a bit if she thought she had to choose between the new friends and you."

"She could still keep her friends and marry me," said Carroll; "I have told her that a hundred times. She could still paint minia-

tures and marry me. But she won't marry me."

"She won't marry you because she knows she can whenever she wants to," cried Marion. "Can't you see that? But if she thought you were going to marry some one else now?"

"She would be the first to congratulate me," said Carroll. He rose and walked to the fireplace, where he leaned with his arm on the mantel. There was a photograph of Helen Cabot near his hand, and he turned this toward him and stood for some time staring at it. "My dear Marion," he said at last, "I've known Helen ever since she was as young as that. Every year I've loved her more, and found new things in her to care for; now I love her more than any other man ever loved any other woman."

Miss Cavendish shook her head sympathetically.

"Yes, I know," she said; "that's the way Reggie loves me, too."

Carroll went on as though he had not heard her.

"There's a bench in St. James's Park," he said, "where we used to sit when she first came here, when she didn't know so many people. We used to go there in the morning and throw penny buns to the ducks. That's been my

amusement this summer since you've all been away—sitting on that bench, feeding penny buns to the silly ducks—especially the black one, the one she used to like best. And I make pilgrimages to all the other places we ever visited together, and try to pretend she is with me. And I support the crossing sweeper at Lansdowne Passage because she once said she felt sorry for him. I do all the other absurd things that a man in love tortures himself by doing. But to what end? She knows how I care, and yet she won't see why we can't go on being friends as we once were. What's the use of it all?"

"She is young, I tell you," repeated Miss Cavendish, "and she's too sure of you. You've told her you care; now try making her think you don't care."

Carroll shook his head impatiently.

"I will not stoop to such tricks and pretense, Marion," he cried, impatiently. "All I have is my love for her; if I have to cheat and to trap her into caring, the whole thing would be degraded."

Miss Cavendish shrugged her shoulders and walked to the door. "Such amateurs!" she exclaimed, and banged the door after her.

Carroll never quite knew how he had come to make a confidante of Miss Cavendish. Helen

and he had met her when they first arrived in London, and as she had acted for a season in the United States, she adopted the two Americans—and told Helen where to go for boots and hats, and advised Carroll about placing his plays. Helen soon made other friends, and deserted the artists with whom her work had first thrown her. She seemed to prefer the society of the people who bought her paintings, and who admired and made much of the painter. As she was very beautiful and at an age when she enjoyed everything in life keenly and eagerly, to give her pleasure was in itself a distinct pleasure; and the worldly tired people she met were considering their own entertainment quite as much as hers when they asked her to their dinners and dances, or to spend a week with them in the country. In her way, she was as independent as was Carroll in his, and as she was not in love, as he was, her life was not narrowed down to but one ideal. But she was not so young as to consider herself infallible, and she had one excellent friend on whom she was dependent for advice and to whose directions she submitted implicitly. This was Lady Gower, the only person to whom Helen had spoken of Carroll and of his great feeling for her. Lady Gower, immediately after her marriage, had been a conspicuous and brilliant

figure in that set in London which works eighteen hours a day to keep itself amused, but after the death of her husband she had disappeared into the country as completely as though she had entered a convent, and after several years had then re-entered the world as a professional philanthropist. Her name was now associated entirely with Women's Leagues, with committees that presented petitions to Parliament, and with public meetings, at which she spoke with marvellous ease and effect. Her old friends said she had taken up this new pose as an outlet for her nervous energies, and as an effort to forget the man who alone had made life serious to her. Others knew her as an earnest woman, acting honestly for what she thought was right. Her success, all admitted, was due to her knowledge of the world and to her sense of humor, which taught her with whom to use her wealth and position, and when to demand what she wanted solely on the ground that the cause was just.

She had taken more than a fancy for Helen, and the position of the beautiful, motherless girl had appealed to her as one filled with dangers. When she grew to know Helen better, she recognized that these fears were quite unnecessary, and as she saw more of her she learned to care for her deeply. Helen had told

her much of Carroll and of his double purpose in coming to London; of his brilliant work and his lack of success in having it recognized; and of his great and loyal devotion to her, and of his lack of success, not in having that recognized, but in her own inability to return it. Helen was proud that she had been able to make Carroll care for her as he did, and that there was anything about her which could inspire a man whom she admired so much to believe in her so absolutely and for so long a time. But what convinced her that the outcome for which he hoped was impossible, was the very fact that she could admire him, and see how fine and unselfish his love for her was, and yet remain untouched by it.

She had been telling Lady Gower one day of the care he had taken of her ever since she was fourteen years of age, and had quoted some of the friendly and loverlike acts he had performed in her service, until one day they had both found out that his attitude of the elder brother was no longer possible, and that he loved her in the old and only way. Lady Gower looked at her rather doubtfully and smiled.

"I wish you would bring him to see me, Helen," she said; "I think I should like your friend very much. From what you tell me of him I doubt if you will find many such men

waiting for you in this country. Our men marry for reasons of property, or they love blindly, and are exacting and selfish before and after they are married. I know, because so many women came to me when my husband was alive to ask how it was that I continued so happy in my married life."

"But I don't want to marry any one," Helen remonstrated, gently. "American girls are not always thinking only of getting married."

"What I meant was this," said Lady Gower: "that, in my experience, I have heard of but few men who care in the way this young man seems to care for you. You say you do not love him; but if he had wanted to gain my interest, he could not have pleaded his cause better than you have done. He seems to see your faults and yet love you still, in spite of them—or on account of them. And I like the things he does for you. I like, for instance, his sending you the book of the moment every week for two years. That shows a most unswerving spirit of devotion. And the story of the broken bridge in the woods is a wonderful story. If I were a young girl, I could love a man for that alone. It was a beautiful thing to do."

Helen sat with her chin on her hands, deeply considering this new point of view.

"I thought it very foolish of him," she confessed, questioningly, "to take such a risk for such a little thing."

Lady Gower smiled down at her from the height of her many years.

"Wait," she said, dryly, "you are very young now—and very rich; every one is crowding to give you pleasure, to show his admiration. You are a very fortunate girl. But later, these things which some man has done because he loved you, and which you call foolish, will grow large in your life, and shine out strongly, and when you are discouraged and alone, you will take them out, and the memory of them will make you proud and happy. They are the honors which women wear in secret."

Helen came back to town in September, and for the first few days was so occupied in refurnishing her studio and in visiting the shops that she neglected to send Carroll word of her return. When she found that a whole week had passed without her having made any effort to see him, and appreciated how the fact would hurt her friend, she was filled with remorse, and drove at once in great haste to Jermyn Street, to announce her return in person. On the way she decided that she would soften the blow of her week of neglect by asking him to take her out to luncheon. This privilege she

had once or twice accorded him, and she felt that the pleasure these excursions gave Carroll were worth the consternation they caused to Lady Gower.

The servant was uncertain whether Mr. Carroll was at home or not, but Helen was too intent upon making restitution to wait for the fact to be determined, and, running up the stairs, knocked sharply at the door of his study.

A voice bade her come in, and she entered, radiant and smiling her welcome. But Carroll was not there to receive it, and, instead, Marion Cavendish looked up at her from his desk, where she was busily writing. Helen paused with a surprised laugh, but Marion sprang up and hailed her gladly. They met half-way across the room and kissed each other with the most friendly feeling.

Philip was out, Marion said, and she had just stepped in for a moment to write him a note. If Helen would excuse her, she would finish it, as she was late for rehearsal.

But she asked over her shoulder, with great interest, if Helen had passed a pleasant summer. She thought she had never seen her looking so well. Helen thought Miss Cavendish herself was looking very well also, but Marion said no; that she was too sunburnt, she would not be able to wear a dinner-dress for a month. There

was a pause while Marion's quill scratched violently across Carroll's note-paper. Helen felt that in some way she was being treated as an intruder; or worse, as a guest. She did not sit down, it seemed impossible to do so, but she moved uncertainly about the room. She noted that there were many changes, it seemed more bare and empty; her picture was still on the writing-desk, but there were at least six new photographs of Marion. Marion herself had brought them to the room that morning, and had carefully arranged them in conspicuous places. But Helen could not know that. She thought there was an unnecessary amount of writing scribbled over the face of each.

Marion addressed her letter and wrote "Immediate" across the envelope, and placed it before the clock on the mantel-shelf. "You will find Philip looking very badly," she said, as she pulled on her gloves. "He has been in town all summer, working very hard—he has had no holiday at all. I don't think he's well. I have been a great deal worried about him," she added. Her face was bent over the buttons of her glove, and when she raised her blue eyes to Helen they were filled with serious concern.

"Really," Helen stammered, "I—I didn't know—in his letters he seemed very cheerful."

Marion shook her head and turned and stood

looking thoughtfully out of the window. "He's in a very hard place," she began, abruptly, and then stopped as though she had thought better of what she intended to say. Helen tried to ask her to go on, but could not bring herself to do so. She wanted to get away.

"I tell him he ought to leave London," Marion began again; "he needs a change and a rest."

"I should think he might," Helen agreed, "after three months of this heat. He wrote me he intended going to Herne Bay or over to Ostend."

"Yes, he had meant to go," Marion answered. She spoke with the air of one who possessed the most intimate knowledge of Carroll's movements and plans, and change of plans. "But he couldn't," she added. "He couldn't afford it. Helen," she said, turning to the other girl, dramatically, "do you know—I believe that Philip is very poor."

Miss Cabot exclaimed, incredulously, "Poor!" She laughed. "Why, what do you mean?"

"I mean that he has no money," Marion answered, sharply. "These rooms represent nothing. He only keeps them on because he paid for them in advance. He's been living on three shillings a day. That's poor for him. He takes his meals at cabmen's shelters and

at Lockhart's, and he's been doing so for a month."

Helen recalled with a guilty thrill the receipt of certain boxes of La France roses—cut long, in the American fashion—which had arrived within the last month at various country-houses. She felt indignant at herself, and miserable. Her indignation was largely due to the recollection that she had given these flowers to her hostess to decorate the dinner-table.

She hated to ask this girl of things which she should have known better than any one else. But she forced herself to do it. She felt she must know certainly and at once.

"How do you know this?" she asked. "Are you sure there is no mistake?"

"He told me himself," said Marion, "when he talked of letting the plays go and returning to America. He said he must go back; that his money was gone."

"He is gone to America!" Helen said, blankly.

"No, he wanted to go, but I wouldn't let him," Marion went on. "I told him that some one might take his play any day. And this third one he has written, the one he finished this summer in town, is the best of all, I think. It's a love-story. It's quite beautiful." She turned and arranged her veil at the glass, and as she did so, her eyes fell on the photographs

of herself scattered over the mantel-piece, and she smiled slightly. But Helen did not see her—she was sitting down now, pulling at the books on the table. She was confused and disturbed by emotions which were quite strange to her, and when Marion bade her good-by she hardly noticed her departure. What impressed her most of all in what Marion had told her was, she was surprised to find, that Philip was going away. That she herself had frequently urged him to do so, for his own peace of mind, seemed now of no consequence. Now that he seriously contemplated it, she recognized that his absence meant to her a change in everything. She felt for the first time the peculiar place he held in her life. Even if she had seen him but seldom, the fact that he was within call had been more of a comfort and a necessity to her than she understood.

That he was poor, concerned her chiefly because she knew that, although this condition could only be but temporary, it would distress him not to have his friends around him, and to entertain them as he had been used to do. She wondered eagerly if she might offer to help him, but a second thought assured her that, for a man, that sort of help from a woman was impossible.

She resented the fact that Marion was deep

in his confidence; that it was Marion who had told her of his changed condition and of his plans. It annoyed her so acutely that she could not remain in the room where she had seen her so complacently in possession. And after leaving a brief note for Philip, she went away. She stopped a hansom at the door, and told the man to drive along the Embankment—she wanted to be quite alone, and she felt she could see no one until she had thought it all out, and had analyzed the new feelings.

So for several hours she drove slowly up and down, sunk far back in the cushions of the cab, and staring with unseeing eyes at the white, enamelled tariff and the black dash-board.

She assured herself that she was not jealous of Marion, because, in order to be jealous, she first would have to care for Philip in the very way she could not bring herself to do.

She decided that his interest in Marion hurt her, because it showed that Philip was not capable of remaining true to the one ideal of his life. She was sure that this explained her feelings—she was disappointed that he had not kept up to his own standard; that he was weak enough to turn aside from it for the first pretty pair of eyes. But she was too honest and too just to accept that diagnosis of her feelings as final—she knew there had been many pairs of

eyes in America and in London, and that though Philip had seen them, he had not answered them when they spoke. No, she confessed frankly, she was hurt with herself for neglecting her old friend so selfishly and for so long a time; his love gave him claims on her consideration, at least, and she had forgotten that and him, and had run after strange gods and allowed others to come in and take her place, and to give him the sympathy and help which she should have been the first to offer, and which would have counted more when coming from her than from any one else. She determined to make amends at once for her thoughtlessness and selfishness, and her brain was pleasantly occupied with plans and acts of kindness. It was a new entertainment, and she found she delighted in it. She directed the cabman to go to Solomons's, and from there sent Philip a bunch of flowers and a line saying that on the following day she was coming to take tea with him. She had a guilty feeling that he might consider her friendly advances more seriously than she meant them, but it was her pleasure to be reckless: her feelings were running riotously, and the sensation was so new that she refused to be circumspect or to consider consequences. Who could tell, she asked herself with a quick, frightened gasp, but that,

after all, it might be that she was learning to care? From Solomons's she bade the man drive to the shop in Cranbourne Street where she was accustomed to purchase the materials she used in painting, and Fate, which uses strange agents to work out its ends, so directed it that the cabman stopped a few doors below this shop, and opposite one where jewelry and other personal effects were bought and sold. At any other time, or had she been in any other mood, what followed might not have occurred, but Fate, in the person of the cabman, arranged it so that the hour and the opportunity came together.

There were some old mezzotints in the window of the loan-shop, a string of coins and medals, a row of new French posters; and far down to the front a tray filled with gold and silver cigarette-cases and watches and rings. It occurred to Helen, who was still bent on making restitution for her neglect, that a cigarette-case would be more appropriate for a man than flowers, and more lasting. And she scanned the contents of the window with the eye of one who now saw in everything only something which might give Philip pleasure. The two objects of value in the tray upon which her eyes first fell were the gold seal-ring with which Philip had sealed his letters to her, and,

lying next to it, his gold watch! There was something almost human in the way the ring and watch spoke to her from the past—in the way they appealed to her to rescue them from the surroundings to which they had been abandoned. She did not know what she meant to do with them nor how she could return them to Philip; but there was no question of doubt in her manner as she swept with a rush into the shop. There was no attempt, either, at bargaining in the way in which she pointed out to the young woman behind the counter the particular ring and watch she wanted. They had not been left as collateral, the young woman said; they had been sold outright.

"Then any one can buy them?" Helen asked, eagerly. "They are for sale to the public—to any one?"

The young woman made note of the customer's eagerness, but with an unmoved countenance.

"Yes, miss, they are for sale. The ring is four pounds and the watch twenty-five."

"Twenty-nine pounds!" Helen gasped.

That was more money than she had in the world, but the fact did not distress her, for she had a true artistic disregard for ready money, and the absence of it had never disturbed her. But now it assumed a sudden and alarming

value. She had ten pounds in her purse and ten pounds at her studio—these were just enough to pay for a quarter's rent and the rates, and there was a hat and cloak in Bond Street which she certainly must have. Her only assets consisted of the possibility that some one might soon order a miniature, and to her mind that was sufficient. Some one always had ordered a miniature, and there was no reasonable doubt but that some one would do it again. For a moment she questioned if it would not be sufficient if she bought the ring and allowed the watch to remain. But she recognized that the ring meant more to her than the watch, while the latter, as an old heirloom which had been passed down to him from a great-grandfather, meant more to Philip. It was for Philip she was doing this, she reminded herself. She stood holding his possessions, one in each hand, and looking at the young woman blankly. She had no doubt in her mind that at least part of the money he had received for them had paid for the flowers he had sent to her in Scotland. The certainty of this left her no choice. She laid the ring and watch down and pulled the only ring she possessed from her own finger. It was a gift from Lady Gower. She had no doubt that it was of great value.

"Can you lend me some money on that?"

she asked. It was the first time she had conducted a business transaction of this nature, and she felt as though she were engaging in a burglary.

"We don't lend money, miss," the girl said, "we buy outright. I can give you twenty-eight shillings for this," she added.

"Twenty-eight shillings!" Helen gasped. "Why, it is worth—oh, ever so much more than that!"

"That is all it is worth to us," the girl answered. She regarded the ring indifferently and laid it away from her on the counter. The action was final.

Helen's hands rose slowly to her breast, where a pretty watch dangled from a bow-knot of crushed diamonds. It was her only possession, and she was very fond of it. It also was the gift of one of the several great ladies who had adopted her since her residence in London. Helen had painted a miniature of this particular great lady which had looked so beautiful that the pleasure which the original of the portrait derived from the thought that she still really looked as she did in the miniature was worth more to her than many diamonds.

But it was different with Helen, and no one could count what it cost her to tear away her one proud possession.

"What will you give me for this?" she asked, defiantly.

The girl's eyes showed greater interest. "I can give you twenty pounds for that," she said.

"Take it, please," Helen begged, as though she feared if she kept it a moment longer she might not be able to make the sacrifice.

"That will be enough now," she went on, taking out her ten-pound note. She put Lady Gower's ring back upon her finger and picked up Philip's ring and watch with the pleasure of one who has come into a great fortune. She turned back at the door.

"Oh," she stammered, "in case any one should inquire, you are not to say who bought these."

"No, miss, certainly not," said the woman. Helen gave the direction to the cabman and, closing the doors of the hansom, sat looking down at the watch and the ring, as they lay in her lap. The thought that they had been his most valued possessions, which he had abandoned forever, and that they were now entirely hers, to do with as she liked, filled her with most intense delight and pleasure. She took up the heavy gold ring and placed it on the little finger of her left hand; it was much too large, and she removed it and balanced it for a moment doubtfully in the palm of her right hand. She was smiling, and her face was lit

with shy and tender thoughts. She cast a quick glance to the left and right as though fearful that people passing in the street would observe her, and then slipped the ring over the fourth finger of her left hand. She gazed at it with a guilty smile, and then, covering it hastily with her other hand, leaned back, clasping it closely, and sat frowning far out before her with puzzled eyes.

To Carroll all roads led past Helen's studio, and during the summer, while she had been absent in Scotland, it was one of his sad pleasures to make a pilgrimage to her street and to pause opposite the house and look up at the empty windows of her rooms. It was during this daily exercise that he learned, through the arrival of her luggage, of her return to London, and when day followed day without her having shown any desire to see him or to tell him of her return, he denounced himself most bitterly as a fatuous fool.

At the end of the week he sat down and considered his case quite calmly. For three years he had loved this girl, deeply and tenderly. He had been lover, brother, friend, and guardian. During that time, even though she had accepted him in every capacity except as that of the prospective husband, she had never given him any real affection, nor sympathy, nor help; all

she had done for him had been done without her knowledge or intent. To know her, to love her, and to scheme to give her pleasure had been its own reward, and the only one. For the last few months he had been living like a crossing sweeper in order to be able to stay in London until she came back to it, and that he might still send her the gifts he had always laid on her altar. He had not seen her in three months. Three months that had been to him a blank, except for his work—which, like all else that he did, was inspired and carried on for her. Now at last she had returned and had shown that, even as a friend, he was of so little account in her thoughts, of so little consequence in her life, that after this long absence she had no desire to learn of his welfare or to see him —she did not even give him the chance to see her. And so, placing these facts before him for the first time since he had loved her, he considered what was due to himself. "Was it good enough?" he asked. "Was it just that he should continue to wear out his soul and body for this girl who did not want what he had to give, who treated him less considerately than a man whom she met for the first time at dinner?" He felt he had reached the breaking-point; that the time had come when he must consider what he owed to himself.

There could never be any other woman save Helen; but as it was not to be Helen, he could no longer, with self-respect, continue to proffer his love only to see it slighted and neglected. He was humble enough concerning himself, but of his love he was very proud. Other men could give her more in wealth or position, but no one could ever love her as he did. "He that hath more let him give," he had often quoted to her defiantly, as though he were challenging the world, and now he felt he must evolve a makeshift world of his own—a world in which she was not his only spring of acts; he must begin all over again and keep his love secret and sacred until she understood it and wanted it. And if she should never want it he would at least have saved it from many rebuffs and insults.

With this determination strong in him, the note Helen had left for him after her talk with Marion, and the flowers, and the note with them, saying she was coming to take tea on the morrow, failed to move him except to make him more bitter. He saw in them only a tardy recognition of her neglect—an effort to make up to him for thoughtlessness which, from her, hurt him worse than studied slight.

A new *régime* had begun, and he was determined to establish it firmly and to make it

impossible for himself to retreat from it; and in the note in which he thanked Helen for the flowers and welcomed her to tea, he declared his ultimatum.

"You know how terribly I feel," he wrote; "I don't have to tell you that, but I cannot always go on dragging out my love and holding it up to excite your pity as beggars show their sores. I cannot always go on praying before your altar, cutting myself with knives and calling upon you to listen to me. You know that there is no one else but you, and that there never can be any one but you, and that nothing is changed except that after this I am not going to urge and torment you. I shall wait as I have always waited—only now I shall wait in silence. You know just how little, in one way, I have to offer you, and you know just how much I have in love to offer you. It is now for you to speak—some day, or never. But you will have to speak first. You will never hear a word of love from me again. Why should you? You know it is always waiting for you. But if you should ever want it, you must come to me, and take off your hat and put it on my table and say, 'Philip, I have come to stay.' Whether you can ever do that or not can make no difference in my love for you. I shall love you always, as no man has ever loved a woman

in this world, but it is you who must speak first; for me, the rest is silence."

The following morning as Helen was leaving the house she found this letter lying on the hall-table, and ran back with it to her rooms. A week before she would have let it lie on the table and read it on her return. She was conscious that this was what she would have done, and it pleased her to find that what concerned Philip was now to her the thing of greatest interest. She was pleased with her own eagerness—her own happiness was a welcome sign, and she was proud and glad that she was learning to care.

She read the letter with an anxious pride and pleasure in each word that was entirely new. Philip's recriminations did not hurt her, they were the sign that he cared; nor did his determination not to speak of his love to her hurt her, for she believed him when he said that he would always care. She read the letter twice, and then sat for some time considering the kind of letter Philip would have written had he known her secret—had he known that the ring he had abandoned was now upon her finger.

She rose and, crossing to a desk, placed the letter in a drawer, and then took it out again and reread the last page. When she had finished it she was smiling. For a moment she

stood irresolute, and then, moving slowly toward the centre-table, cast a guilty look about her and, raising her hands, lifted her veil and half withdrew the pins that fastened her hat.

"Philip," she began, in a frightened whisper, "I have—I have come to——"

The sentence ended in a cry of protest, and she rushed across the room as though she were running from herself. She was blushing violently.

"Never!" she cried, as she pulled open the door; "I could never do it—never!"

The following afternoon, when Helen was to come to tea, Carroll decided that he would receive her with all the old friendliness, but that he must be careful to subdue all emotion.

He was really deeply hurt at her treatment, and had it not been that she came on her own invitation he would not of his own accord have sought to see her. In consequence, he rather welcomed than otherwise the arrival of Marion Cavendish, who came a half-hour before Helen was expected, and who followed a hasty knock with a precipitate entrance.

"Sit down," she commanded, breathlessly, "and listen. I've been at rehearsal all day, or I'd have been here before you were awake." She seated herself nervously and nodded her head at Carroll in an excited and mysterious manner.

"What is it?" he asked. "Have you and Reggie——"

"Listen," Marion repeated. "Our fortunes are made; that is what's the matter—and I've made them. If you took half the interest in your work I do, you'd have made yours long ago. Last night," she began, impressively, "I went to a large supper at the Savoy, and I sat next to Charley Wimpole. He came in late, after everybody had finished, and I attacked him while he was eating his supper. He said he had been rehearsing 'Caste' after the performance; that they've put it on as a stop-gap on account of the failure of 'The Triflers,' and that he knew revivals were of no use; that he would give any sum for a good modern comedy. That was my cue, and I told him I knew of a better comedy than any he had produced at his theatre in five years, and that it was going begging. He laughed, and asked where was he to find this wonderful comedy, and I said, 'It's been in your safe for the last two months and you haven't read it.' He said, 'Indeed, how do you know that?' and I said, 'Because if you'd read it, it wouldn't be in your safe, but on your stage.' So he asked me what the play was about, and I told him the plot and what sort of a part his was, and some of his scenes, and he began to take notice. He forgot his supper,

and very soon he grew so interested that he turned his chair round and kept eying my supper-card to find out who I was, and at last remembered seeing me in 'The New Boy'—and a rotten part it was, too—but he remembered it, and he told me to go on and tell him more about your play. So I recited it, bit by bit, and he laughed in all the right places and got very much excited, and said finally that he would read it the first thing this morning." Marion paused, breathlessly. "Oh, yes, and he wrote your address on his cuff," she added, with the air of delivering a complete and convincing climax.

Carroll stared at her and pulled excitedly on his pipe.

"Oh, Marion!" he gasped, "suppose he should? He won't, though," he added, but eying her eagerly and inviting contradiction.

"He will," she answered, stoutly, "if he reads it."

"The other managers read it," Carroll suggested, doubtfully.

"Yes, but what do they know?" Marion returned, loftily. "He knows. Charles Wimpole is the only intelligent actor-manager in London."

There was a sharp knock at the door, which Marion in her excitement had left ajar, and

Prentiss threw it wide open with an impressive sweep, as though he were announcing royalty. "Mr. Charles Wimpole," he said.

The actor-manager stopped in the doorway bowing gracefully, his hat held before him and his hand on his stick as though it were resting on a foil. He had the face and carriage of a gallant of the days of Congreve, and he wore his modern frock-coat with as much distinction as if it were of silk and lace. He was evidently amused. "I couldn't help overhearing the last line," he said, smiling. "It gives me a good entrance."

Marion gazed at him blankly. "Oh," she gasped, "we—we—were just talking about you."

"If you hadn't mentioned my name," the actor said, "I should never have guessed it. And this is Mr. Carroll, I hope."

The great man was rather pleased with the situation. As he read it, it struck him as possessing strong dramatic possibilities: Carroll was the struggling author on the verge of starvation; Marion, his sweetheart, flying to him gave him hope; and he was the good fairy arriving in the nick of time to set everything right and to make the young people happy and prosperous. He rather fancied himself in the part of the good fairy, and as he seated himself

he bowed to them both in a manner which was charmingly inclusive and confidential.

"Miss Cavendish, I imagine, has already warned you that you might expect a visit from me," he said, tentatively. Carroll nodded. He was too much concerned to interrupt.

"Then I need only tell you," Wimpole continued, "that I got up at an absurd hour this morning to read your play; that I did read it; that I like it immensely—and that if we can come to terms I shall produce it. I shall produce it at once, within a fortnight or three weeks."

Carroll was staring at him intently and continued doing so after Wimpole had finished speaking. The actor felt he had somehow missed his point, or that Carroll could not have understood him, and repeated, "I say I shall put it in rehearsal at once."

Carroll rose abruptly, and pushed back his chair. "I should be very glad," he murmured, and strode over to the window, where he stood with his back turned to his guests. Wimpole looked after him with a kindly smile and nodded his head appreciatively. He had produced even a greater effect than his lines seemed to warrant. When he spoke again, it was quite simply, and sincerely, and though he spoke for Carroll's benefit, he addressed himself to Marion.

"You were quite right last night," he said; "it is a most charming piece of work. I am really extremely grateful to you for bringing it to my notice." He rose, and going to Carroll, put his hand on his shoulder. "My boy," he said, "I congratulate you. I should like to be your age, and to have written that play. Come to my theatre to-morrow and we will talk terms. Talk it over first with your friends, so that I shan't rob you. Do you think you would prefer a lump sum now, and so be done with it altogether, or trust that the royalties may——"

"Royalties," prompted Marion, in an eager aside.

The men laughed. "Quite right," Wimpole assented, good-humoredly; "it's a poor sportsman who doesn't back his own horse. Well, then, until to-morrow."

"But," Carroll began, "one moment, please. I haven't thanked you."

"My dear boy," cried Wimpole, waving him away with his stick, "it is I who have to thank you."

"And—and there is a condition," Carroll said, "which goes with the play. It is that Miss Cavendish is to have the part of *Nancy*."

Wimpole looked serious and considered for a moment.

"*Nancy*," he said, "the girl who interferes—a very good part. I have cast Miss Maddox for it in my mind, but, of course, if the author insists——"

Marion, with her elbows on the table, clasped her hands appealingly before her.

"Oh, Mr. Wimpole!" she cried, "you owe me that, at least."

Carroll leaned over and took both of Marion's hands in one of his.

"It's all right," he said; "the author insists."

Wimpole waved his stick again as though it were the magic wand of the good fairy.

"You shall have it," he said. "I recall your performance in 'The New Boy' with pleasure. I take the play, and Miss Cavendish shall be cast for *Nancy*. We shall begin rehearsals at once. I hope you are a quick study."

"I'm letter-perfect now," laughed Marion.

Wimpole turned at the door and nodded to them. They were both so young, so eager, and so jubilant that he felt strangely old and out of it. "Good-by, then," he said.

"Good-by, sir," they both chorused. And Marion cried after him, "And thank you a thousand times."

He turned again and looked back at them, but in their rejoicing they had already forgotten him. "Bless you, my children," he said, smil-

ing. As he was about to close the door a young girl came down the passage toward it, and as she was apparently going to Carroll's rooms, the actor left the door open behind him.

Neither Marion nor Carroll had noticed his final exit. They were both gazing at each other as though, could they find speech, they would ask if it were true.

"It's come at last, Marion," Philip said, with an uncertain voice.

"I could weep," cried Marion. "Philip," she exclaimed, "I would rather see that play succeed than any play ever written, and I would rather play that part in it than— Oh, Philip," she ended, "I'm so proud of you!" and rising, she threw her arms about his neck and sobbed on his shoulder.

Carroll raised one of her hands and kissed the tips of her fingers gently. "I owe it to you, Marion," he said—"all to you."

This was the tableau that was presented through the open door to Miss Helen Cabot, hurrying on her errand of restitution and good-will, and with Philip's ring and watch clasped in her hand. They had not heard her, nor did they see her at the door, so she drew back quickly and ran along the passage and down the stairs into the street.

She did not need now to analyze her feelings.

They were only too evident. For she could translate what she had just seen as meaning only one thing—that she had considered Philip's love so lightly that she had not felt it passing away from her until her neglect had killed it—until it was too late. And now that it was too late she felt that without it her life could not go on. She tried to assure herself that only the fact that she had lost it made it seem invaluable, but this thought did not comfort her—she was not deceived by it, she knew that at last she cared for him deeply and entirely. In her distress she blamed herself bitterly, but she also blamed Philip no less bitterly for having failed to wait for her. "He might have known that I must love him in time," she repeated to herself again and again. She was so unhappy that her letter congratulating Philip on his good fortune in having his comedy accepted seemed to him cold and unfeeling, and as his success meant for him only what it meant to her, he was hurt and grievously disappointed.

He accordingly turned the more readily to Marion, whose interest and enthusiasm at the rehearsals of the piece seemed in contrast most friendly and unselfish. He could not help but compare the attitude of the two girls at this time, when the failure or success of his best work was still undecided. He felt that as Helen

took so little interest in his success he could not dare to trouble her with his anxieties concerning it, and she attributed his silence to his preoccupation and interest in Marion. So the two grew apart, each misunderstanding the other and each troubled in spirit at the other's indifference.

The first night of the play justified all that Marion and Wimpole had claimed for it, and was a great personal triumph for the new playwright. The audience was the typical first-night audience of the class which Charles Wimpole always commanded. It was brilliant, intelligent, and smart, and it came prepared to be pleased.

From one of the upper stage-boxes Helen and Lady Gower watched the successful progress of the play with an anxiety almost as keen as that of the author. To Helen it seemed as though the giving of these lines to the public—these lines which he had so often read to her, and altered to her liking—was a desecration. It seemed as though she were losing him indeed—as though he now belonged to these strange people, all of whom were laughing and applauding his words, from the German Princess in the Royal box to the straight-backed Tommy in the pit. Instead of the painted scene before her, she saw the birch-trees by the river at

home, where he had first read her the speech to which they were now listening so intensely—the speech in which the hero tells the girl he loves her. She remembered that at the time she had thought how wonderful it would be if some day some one made such a speech to her—not Philip, but a man she loved. And now? If Philip would only make that speech to her now!

He came out at last, with Wimpole leading him, and bowed across a glaring barrier of lights at a misty but vociferous audience that was shouting the generous English bravo! and standing up to applaud. He raised his eyes to the box where Helen sat, and saw her staring down at the tumult, with her hands clasped under her chin. Her face was colorless, but lit with the excitement of the moment; and he saw that she was crying.

Lady Gower, from behind her, was clapping her hands delightedly.

"But, my dear Helen," she remonstrated, breathlessly, "you never told me he was so good-looking."

"Yes," said Helen, rising abruptly, "he is—very good-looking."

She crossed the box to where her cloak was hanging, but instead of taking it down, buried her face in its folds.

"My dear child!" cried Lady Gower, in dis-

may. "What is it? The excitement has been too much for you."

"No, I am just happy," sobbed Helen. "I am just happy for him."

"We will go and tell him so, then," said Lady Gower. "I am sure he would like to hear it from you to-night."

Philip was standing in the centre of the stage, surrounded by many pretty ladies and elderly men. Wimpole was hovering over him as though he had claims upon him by the right of discovery.

But when Philip saw Helen, he pushed his way toward her eagerly and took her hand in both of his.

"I am so glad, Phil," she said. She felt it all so deeply that she was afraid to say more, but that meant so much to her that she was sure he would understand.

He had planned it very differently. For a year he had dreamed that, on the first night of his play, there would be a supper, and that he would rise and drink her health, and tell his friends and the world that she was the woman he loved, and that she had agreed to marry him, and that at last he was able, through the success of his play, to make her his wife.

And now they met in a crowd to shake hands, and she went her way with one of her grand

ladies, and he was left among a group of chattering strangers. The great English playwright took him by the hand and in the hearing of all praised him gracefully and kindly. It did not matter to Philip whether the older playwright believed what he said or not; he knew it was generously meant.

"I envy you this," the great man was saying. "Don't lose any of it, stay and listen to all they have to say. You will never live through the first night of your first play but once."

"Yes, I hear them," said Philip, nervously; "they are all too kind. But I don't hear the voice I have been listening for," he added, in a whisper. The older man pressed his hand again quickly. "My dear boy," he said, "I am sorry."

"Thank you," Philip answered.

Within a week he had forgotten the great man's fine words of praise, but the clasp of his hand he cherished always.

Helen met Marion as she was leaving the stage-door and stopped to congratulate her on her success in the new part. Marion was radiant. To Helen she seemed obstreperously happy and jubilant.

"And, Marion," Helen began, bravely, "I also want to congratulate you on something else. You—you—neither of you have told me

yet," she stammered, "but I am such an old friend of both that I will not be kept out of the secret." At these words Marion's air of triumphant gayety vanished; she regarded Helen's troubled eyes closely and kindly.

"What secret, Helen?" she asked.

"I came to the door of Philip's room the other day when you did not know I was there," Helen answered, "and I could not help seeing how matters were. And I do congratulate you both—and wish you—oh, such happiness!" Without a word Marion dragged her back down the passage to her dressing-room, and closed the door.

"Now tell me what you mean," she said.

"I am sorry if I discovered anything you didn't want known yet," said Helen, "but the door was open. Mr. Wimpole had just left you and had not shut it, and I could not help seeing."

Marion interrupted her with an eager exclamation of enlightenment.

"Oh, you were there, then," she cried. "And you?" she asked, eagerly—"you thought Phil cared for me—that we are engaged, and it hurt you; you are sorry? Tell me," she demanded, "are you sorry?"

Helen drew back and stretched out her hand toward the door.

"How can you!" she exclaimed, indignantly. "You have no right."

Marion stood between her and the door.

"I have every right," she said, "to help my friends, and I want to help you and Philip. And, indeed, I do hope you *are* sorry. I hope you are miserable. And I'm glad you saw me kiss him. That was the first and the last time, and I did it because I was happy and glad for him; and because I love him, too, but not in the least in the way he loves you. No one ever loved any one as he loves you. And it's time you found it out. And if I have helped to make you find it out, I'm glad, and I don't care how much I hurt you."

"Marion!" exclaimed Helen, "what does it mean? Do you mean that you are not engaged; that——"

"Certainly not," Marion answered. "I am going to marry Reggie. It is you that Philip loves, and I am very sorry for you that you don't love him."

Helen clasped Marion's hands in both of hers.

"But, Marion!" she cried, "I do, oh, I do!"

There was a thick yellow fog the next morning, and with it rain and a sticky, depressing

dampness which crept through the window-panes, and which neither a fire nor blazing gas-jets could overcome.

Philip stood in front of the fireplace with the morning papers piled high on the centre-table and scattered over the room about him.

He had read them all, and he knew now what it was to wake up famous, but he could not taste it. Now that it had come it meant nothing, and that it was so complete a triumph only made it the harder. In his most optimistic dreams he had never imagined success so satisfying as the reality had proved to be; but in his dreams Helen had always held the chief part, and without her, success seemed only to mock him.

He wanted to lay it all before her, to say, "If you are pleased, I am happy. If you are satisfied, then I am content. It was done for you, and I am wholly yours, and all that I do is yours." And, as though in answer to his thoughts, there was an instant knock at the door, and Helen entered the room and stood smiling at him across the table.

Her eyes were lit with excitement, and spoke with many emotions, and her cheeks were brilliant with color. He had never seen her look more beautiful.

"Why, Helen!" he exclaimed, "how good of

you to come. Is there anything wrong? Is anything the matter?"

She tried to speak, but faltered, and smiled at him appealingly.

"What is it?" he asked in great concern.

Helen drew in her breath quickly, and at the same moment motioned him away—and he stepped back and stood watching her in much perplexity.

With her eyes fixed on his she raised her hands to her head, and her fingers fumbled with the knot of her veil. She pulled it loose, and then, with a sudden courage, lifted her hat proudly, as though it were a coronet, and placed it between them on his table.

"Philip," she stammered, with the tears in her voice and eyes, "if you will let me—I have come to stay."

The table was no longer between them. He caught her in his arms and kissed her face and her uncovered head again and again. From outside the rain beat drearily and the fog rolled through the street, but inside before the fire the two young people sat close together, asking eager questions or sitting in silence, staring at the flames with wondering, happy eyes.

The Lion and the Unicorn saw them only once again. It was a month later when they

stopped in front of the shop in a four-wheeler, with their baggage mixed on top of it, and steamer-labels pasted over every trunk.

"And, oh, Prentiss!" Carroll called from the cab-window. "I came near forgetting. I promised to gild the Lion and the Unicorn if I won out in London. So have it done, please, and send the bill to me. For I've won out all right." And then he shut the door of the cab, and they drove away forever.

"Nice gal, that," growled the Lion. "I always liked her. I am glad they've settled it at last."

The Unicorn sighed sentimentally. "The other one's worth two of her," he said.

THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER

A SKETCH CONTAINING THREE POINTS OF VIEW

What the Poet Laureate wrote.

"THERE are girls in the Gold Reef City,
There are mothers and children too!
And they cry 'Hurry up for pity!'
So what can a brave man do?

"I suppose we were wrong, were mad men,
Still I think at the Judgment Day,
When God sifts the good from the bad men,
There'll be something more to say."

What more the Lord Chief Justice found to say.

"In this case we know the immediate consequence of your crime. It has been the loss of human life, it has been the disturbance of public peace, it has been the creation of a certain sense of distrust of public professions and of public faith. . . . The sentence of this Court therefore is that, as to you, Leander Starr Jameson, you be confined for a period

of fifteen months without hard labor; that you, Sir John Willoughby, have ten months' imprisonment; and that you, etc., etc."

London Times, July 29th.

What the Hon. "Reggie" Blake thought about it.

"H. M. Holloway Prison,
"July 28th.

"I am going to keep a diary while I am in prison, that is, if they will let me. I never kept one before because I hadn't the time; when I was home on leave there was too much going on to bother about it, and when I was up country I always came back after a day's riding so tired that I was too sleepy to write anything. And now that I have the time, I won't have anything to write about. I fancy that more things happened to me to-day than are likely to happen again for the next eight months, so I will make this day take up as much room in the diary as it can. I am writing this on the back of the paper the Warder uses for his official reports, while he is hunting up cells to put us in. We came down on him rather unexpectedly and he is nervous.

"Of course, I had prepared myself for this after a fashion, but now I see that somehow I never really did think I would be in here, and

all my friends outside, and everything going on just the same as though I wasn't alive somewhere. It's like telling yourself that your horse can't possibly pull off a race, so that you won't mind so much if he doesn't, but you always feel just as bad when he comes in a loser. A man can't fool himself into thinking one way when he is hoping the other.

"But I am glad it is over, and settled. It was a great bore not knowing your luck and having the thing hanging over your head every morning when you woke up. Indeed it it was quite a relief when the counsel got all through arguing over those proclamations, and the Chief Justice summed up, but I nearly went to sleep when I found he was going all over it again to the jury. I didn't understand about those proclamations myself and I'll lay a fiver the jury didn't either. The Colonel said he didn't. I couldn't keep my mind on what Russell was explaining about, and I got to thinking how much old Justice Hawkins looked like the counsel in 'Alice in Wonderland' when they tried the knave of spades for stealing the tarts. He has just the same sort of a beak and the same sort of a wig, and I wondered why he had his wig powdered and the others didn't. Pollock's wig had a hole in the top; you could see it when he bent over to take

notes. He was always taking notes. I don't believe he understood about those proclamations either; he never seemed to listen, anyway.

"The Chief Justice certainly didn't love us very much, that's sure; and he wasn't going to let anybody else love us either. I felt quite the Christian Martyr when Sir Edward was speaking in defense. He made it sound as though we were all a lot of Adelphi heroes and ought to be promoted and have medals, but when Lord Russell started in to read the Riot Act at us I began to believe that hanging was too good for me. I'm sure I never knew I was disturbing the peace of nations; it seems like such a large order for a subaltern.

"But the worst was when they made us stand up before all those people to be sentenced. I must say I felt shaky about the knees then, not because I was afraid of what was coming, but because it was the first time I had ever been pointed out before people, and made to feel ashamed. And having those girls there, too, looking at one. That wasn't just fair to us. It made me feel about ten years old, and I remembered how the Head Master used to call me to his desk and say, 'Blake Senior, two pages of Horace and keep in bounds for a week.' And then I heard our names and the months, and my name and

'eight months' imprisonment,' and there was a bustle and murmur and the tipstaves cried, 'Order in the Court,' and the Judges stood up and shook out their big red skirts as though they were shaking off the contamination of our presence and rustled away, and I sat down, wondering how long eight months was, and wishing they'd given me as much as they gave Jameson.

"They put us in a room together then, and our counsel said how sorry they were, and shook hands, and went off to dinner and left us. I thought they might have waited with us and been a little late for dinner just that once; but no one waited except a lot of costers outside whom we did not know. It was eight o'clock and still quite light when we came out, and there was a line of four-wheelers and a hansom ready for us. I'd been hoping they would take us out by the Strand entrance, just because I'd liked to have seen it again, but they marched us instead through the main quadrangle—a beastly, gloomy courtyard that echoed, and out, into Carey Street—such a dirty, gloomy street. The costers and clerks set up a sort of a cheer when we came out, and one of them cried, 'God bless you, sir,' to the doctor, but I was sorry they cheered. It seemed like kicking against the umpire's decision. The

Colonel and I got into a hansom together and we trotted off into Chancery Lane and turned into Holborn. Most of the shops were closed, and the streets looked empty, but there was a lighted clock-face over Mooney's public house, and the hands stood at a quarter past eight. I didn't know where Holloway was, and was hoping they would have to take us through some decent streets to reach it; but we didn't see a part of the city that meant anything to me, or that I would choose to travel through again.

"Neither of us talked, and I imagined that the people in the streets knew we were going to prison, and I kept my eyes on the enamel card on the back of the apron. I suppose I read, 'Two-wheeled hackney carriage: if hired and discharged within the four-mile limit, 1*s*.' at least a hundred times. I got more sensible after a bit, and when we had turned into Gray's Inn Road I looked up and saw a tram in front of us with 'Holloway Road and King's X,' painted on the steps, and the Colonel saw it about the same time I fancy, for we each looked at the other, and the Colonel raised his eyebrows. It showed us that at least the cabman knew where we were going.

"'They might have taken us for a turn through the West End first, I think,' the Colonel

said. 'I'd like to have had a look around, wouldn't you? This isn't a cheerful neighborhood, is it?'

"There were a lot of children playing in St. Andrew's Gardens, and a crowd of them ran out just as we passed, shrieking and laughing over nothing, the way kiddies do, and that was about the only pleasant sight in the ride. I had quite a turn when we came to the New Hospital just beyond, for I thought it was Holloway, and it came over me what eight months in such a place meant. I believe if I hadn't pulled myself up sharp, I'd have jumped out into the street and run away. It didn't last more than a few seconds, but I don't want any more like them. I was afraid, afraid—there's no use pretending it was anything else. I was in a dumb, silly funk, and I turned sick inside and shook, as I have seen a horse shake when he shies at nothing and sweats and trembles down his sides.

"During those few seconds it seemed to be more than I could stand; I felt sure that I couldn't do it—that I'd go mad if they tried to force me. The idea was so terrible—of not being master over your own legs and arms, to have your flesh and blood and what brains God gave you buried alive in stone walls as though they were in a safe with a time-lock on the

door set for eight months ahead. There's nothing to be afraid of in a stone wall really, but it's the idea of the thing—of not being free to move about, especially to a chap that has always lived in the open as I have, and has had men under him. It was no wonder I was in a funk for a minute. I'll bet a fiver the others were, too, if they'll only own up to it. I don't mean for long, but just when the idea first laid hold of them. Anyway, it was a good lesson to me, and if I catch myself thinking of it again I'll whistle, or talk to myself out loud and think of something cheerful. And I don't mean to be one of those chaps who spends his time in jail counting the stones in his cell, or training spiders, or measuring how many of his steps make a mile, for madness lies that way. I mean to sit tight and think of all the good times I've had, and go over them in my mind very slowly, so as to make them last longer and remember who was there and what we said, and the jokes and all that; I'll go over house-parties I have been on, and the times I've had in the Riviera, and scouting-parties Dr. Jim led up country when we were taking Matabele Land.

"They say that if you're good here they give you things to read after a month or two, and then I can read up all those instructive

books that a fellow never does read until he's laid up in bed.

"But that's crowding ahead a bit; I must keep to what happened to-day. We struck York Road at the back of the Great Western Terminus, and I half hoped we might see some chap we knew coming or going away: I would like to have waved my hand to him. It would have been fun to have seen his surprise the next morning when he read in the paper that he had been bowing to jail-birds, and then I would like to have cheated the tipstaves out of just one more friendly good-by. I wanted to say good-by to somebody, but I really couldn't feel sorry to see the last of any one of those we passed in the streets—they were such a dirty, unhappy-looking lot, and the railroad wall ran on forever apparently, and we might have been in a foreign country for all we knew of it. There were just sooty gray brick tenements and gas-works on one side, and the railroad cutting on the other, and semaphores and telegraph wires overhead, and smoke and grime everywhere, it looked exactly like the sort of street that should lead to a prison, and it seemed a pity to take a smart hansom and a good cob into it.

"It was just a bit different from our last ride together—when we rode through the night

from Krugers-Dorp with hundreds of horses' hoofs pounding on the soft veldt behind us, and the carbines clanking against the stirrups as they swung on the sling belts. We were being hunted then, harassed on either side, scurrying for our lives like the Derby Dog in a race-track when every one hoots him and no man steps out to help—we were sick for sleep, sick for food, lashed by the rain, and we knew that we were beaten; but we were free still, and under open skies with the derricks of the Rand rising like gallows on our left, and Johannesburg only fifteen miles away."

MISS DELAMAR'S UNDERSTUDY

A YOUNG man runs two chances of marrying the wrong woman. He marries her because she is beautiful, and because he persuades himself that every other lovable attribute must be associated with such beauty, or because she is in love with him. If this latter is the case, she gives certain values to what he thinks and to what he says which no other woman gives, and so he observes to himself, "This is the woman who best understands *me*."

You can reverse this and say that young women run the same risks, but as men are seldom beautiful, the first danger is eliminated. Women still marry men, however, because they are loved by them, and in time the woman grows to depend upon this love and to need it, and is not content without it, and so she consents to marry the man for no other reason than because he cares for her. For if a dog, even, runs up to you wagging his tail and acting as though he were glad to see you, you pat him on the head and say, "What a nice dog." You like him because he likes you, and

not because he belongs to a fine breed of animal and could take blue ribbons at bench shows.

This is the story of a young man who was in love with a beautiful woman, and who allowed her beauty to compensate him for many other things. When she failed to understand what he said to her he smiled and looked at her and forgave her at once, and when she began to grow uninteresting, he would take up his hat and go away, and so he never knew how very uninteresting she might possibly be if she were given time enough in which to demonstrate the fact. He never considered that, were he married to her, he could not take up his hat and go away when she became uninteresting, and that her remarks, which were not brilliant, could not be smiled away either. They would rise up and greet him every morning, and would be the last thing he would hear at night.

Miss Delamar's beauty was so conspicuous that to pretend not to notice it was more foolish than well-bred. You got along more easily and simply by accepting it at once, and referring to it, and enjoying its effect upon other people. To go out of one's way to talk of other things when every one, even Miss Delamar herself, knew what must be uppermost in your mind, always seemed as absurd as to strain a point in politeness, and to pretend not

to notice that a guest had upset his claret, or any other embarrassing fact. For Miss Delamar's beauty was so distinctly embarrassing that this was the only way to meet it—to smile and pass it over and to try, if possible, to get on to something else. It was on account of this extraordinary quality in her appearance that every one considered her beauty as something which transcended her private ownership, and which belonged by right to the polite world at large, to any one who could appreciate it properly, just as though it were a sunset or a great work of art or of nature. And so, when she gave away her photographs no one thought it meant anything more serious than a recognition on her part of the fact that it would have been unkind and selfish in her not to have shared the enjoyment of so much loveliness with others.

Consequently, when she sent one of her largest and most aggravatingly beautiful photographs to young Stuart, it was no sign that she cared especially for him.

How much young Stuart cared for Miss Delamar, however, was an open question and a condition yet to be discovered. That he cared for some one, and cared so much that his imagination had begun to picture the awful joys and responsibilities of marriage, was only too well

known to himself, and was a state of mind already suspected by his friends.

Stuart was a member of the New York bar, and the distinguished law firm to which he belonged was very proud of its junior member, and treated him with indulgence and affection, which was not unmixed with amusement. For Stuart's legal knowledge had been gathered in many odd corners of the globe, and was various and peculiar. It had been his pleasure to study the laws by which men ruled other men in every condition of life, and under every sun. The regulations of a new mining camp were fraught with as great interest to him as the accumulated precedents of the English Constitution, and he had investigated the rulings of the mixed courts of Egypt and of the government of the little Dutch republic near the Cape with as keen an effort to comprehend as he had shown in studying the laws of the American colonies and of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

But he was not always serious, and it sometimes happened that after he had arrived at some queer little island where the native prince and the English governor sat in judgment together, his interest in the intricacies of their laws would give way to the more absorbing occupation of chasing wild boar or shooting at

tigers from the top of an elephant. And so he was not only regarded as an authority on many forms of government and of law, into which no one else had ever taken the trouble to look, but his books on big game were eagerly read and his articles in the magazines were earnestly discussed, whether they told of the divorce laws of Dakota, and the legal rights of widows in Cambodia, or the habits of the Mexican lion.

Stuart loved his work better than he knew, but how well he loved Miss Delamar neither he nor his friends could tell. She was the most beautiful and lovely creature that he had ever seen, and of that only was he certain.

Stuart was sitting in the club one day when the conversation turned to matrimony. He was among his own particular friends, the men before whom he could speak seriously or foolishly without fear of being misunderstood or of having what he said retold and spoiled in the telling. There was Seldon, the actor, and Rives, who painted pictures, and young Sloane, who travelled for pleasure and adventure, and Weimer, who stayed at home and wrote for the reviews. They were all bachelors, and very good friends, and jealously guarded their little circle from the intrusion of either men or women.

"Of course the chief objection to marriage,"

Stuart said—it was the very day in which the picture had been sent to his rooms—"is the old one that you can't tell anything about it until you are committed to it forever. It is a very silly thing to discuss even, because there is no way of bringing it about, but there really should be some sort of a preliminary trial. As the man says in the play, 'You wouldn't buy a watch without testing it first.' You don't buy a hat even without putting it on, and finding out whether it is becoming or not, or whether your peculiar style of ugliness can stand it. And yet men go gayly off and get married, and make the most awful promises, and alter their whole order of life, and risk the happiness of some lovely creature on trust, as it were, knowing absolutely nothing of the new conditions and responsibilities of the life before them. Even a river-pilot has to serve an apprenticeship before he gets a license, and yet we are allowed to take just as great risks, and only because we *want* to take them. It's awful, and it's all wrong."

"Well, I don't see what one is going to do about it," commented young Sloane, lightly, "except to get divorced. That road is always open."

Sloane was starting the next morning for the Somali Country, in Abyssinia, to shoot rhinoc-

eros, and his interest in matrimony was in consequence somewhat slight.

"It isn't the fear of the responsibilities that keeps Stuart, nor any one of us back," said Weimer, contemptuously. "It's because we're selfish. That's the whole truth of the matter. We love our work, or our pleasure, or to knock about the world, better than we do any particular woman. When one of us comes to love the woman best, his conscience won't trouble him long about the responsibilities of marrying her."

"Not at all," said Stuart. "I am quite sincere; I maintain that there should be a preliminary stage. Of course there can't be, and it's absurd to think of it, but it would save a lot of unhappiness."

"Well," said Seldon, dryly, "when you've invented a way to prevent marriage from being a lottery, let me know, will you?" He stood up and smiled nervously. "Any of you coming to see us to-night?" he asked.

"That's so," exclaimed Weimer; "I forgot. It's the first night of 'A Fool and His Money,' isn't it? Of course we're coming."

"I told them to put a box away for you in case you wanted it," Seldon continued. "Don't expect much. It's a silly piece, and I've a silly part, and I'm very bad in it. You must

come around to supper, and tell me where I'm bad in it, and we will talk it over. You're coming, Stuart?"

"My dear old man," said Stuart, reproachfully, "of course I am. I've had my seats for the last three weeks. Do you suppose I could miss hearing you mispronounce all the Hindostanee I've taught you?"

"Well, good-night then," said the actor, waving his hand to his friends as he moved away. "'We, who are about to die, salute you!'"

"Good luck to you," said Sloane, holding up his glass. "To the Fool and His Money," he laughed. He turned to the table again, and sounded the bell for the waiter. "Now let's send him a telegram and wish him success, and all sign it," he said, "and don't you fellows tell him that I wasn't in front to-night. I've got to go to a dinner the Travellers' Club are giving me." There was a protesting chorus of remonstrance. "Oh, I don't like it any better than you do," said Sloane, "but I'll get away early and join you before the play's over. No one in the Travellers' Club, you see, has ever travelled farther from New York than London or the Riviera, and so when a member starts for Abyssinia they give him a dinner, and he has to take himself very seriously indeed, and

cry with Seldon, 'I, who am about to die, salute you!' If that man there was any use," he added, interrupting himself and pointing with his glass at Stuart, "he'd pack up his things to-night and come with me."

"Oh, don't urge him," remonstrated Weimer, who had travelled all over the world in imagination, with the aid of globes and maps, but never had got any farther from home than Montreal. "We can't spare Stuart. He has to stop here and invent a preliminary marriage state, so that if he finds he doesn't like a girl, he can leave her before it is too late."

"You sail at seven, I believe, and from Hoboken, don't you?" asked Stuart, undisturbed. "If you'll start at eleven from the New York side, I think I'll go with you, but I hate getting up early; and then you see—I know what dangers lurk in Abyssinia, but who could tell what might not happen to him in Hoboken?"

When Stuart returned to his room, he found a large package set upright in an armchair and enveloped by many wrappings; but the handwriting on the outside told him at once from whom it came and what it might be, and he pounced upon it eagerly and tore it from its covers. The photograph was a very large one, and the likeness to the original so admirable

that the face seemed to smile and radiate with all the loveliness and beauty of Miss Delamar herself. Stuart beamed upon it with genuine surprise and pleasure, and exclaimed delightedly to himself. There was a living quality about the picture which made him almost speak to it, and thank Miss Delamar through it for the pleasure she had given him and the honor she had bestowed. He was proud, flattered, and triumphant, and while he walked about the room deciding where he would place it, and holding the picture respectfully before him, he smiled upon it with grateful satisfaction.

He decided against his dressing-table as being too intimate a place for it, and so carried the picture on from his bedroom to the dining-room beyond, where he set it among his silver on the sideboard. But so little of his time was spent in this room that he concluded he would derive but little pleasure from it there, and so bore it back again into his library, where there were many other photographs and portraits, and where to other eyes than his own it would be less conspicuous.

He tried it first in one place and then in another; but in each position the picture predominated and asserted itself so markedly, that Stuart gave up the idea of keeping it inconspicuous, and placed it prominently over

the fireplace, where it reigned supreme above every other object in the room. It was not only the most conspicuous object there, but the living quality which it possessed in so marked a degree, and which was due to its naturalness of pose and the excellence of the likeness, made it permeate the place like a presence and with the individuality of a real person. Stuart observed this effect with amused interest, and noted also that the photographs of other women had become commonplace in comparison like lithographs in a shop-window, and that the more masculine accessories of a bachelor's apartment had grown suddenly aggressive and out of keeping. The liquor-case and the racks of arms and of barbarous weapons which he had collected with such pride seemed to have lost their former value and meaning, and he instinctively began to gather up the mass of books and maps and photographs and pipes and gloves which lay scattered upon the table, and to put them in their proper place, or to shove them out of sight altogether. "If I'm to live up to that picture," he thought, "I must see that George keeps this room in better order —and I must stop wandering round here in my bath-robe."

His mind continued on the picture while he was dressing, and he was so absorbed in it and

in analyzing the effect it had had upon him, that his servant spoke twice before he heard him.

"No," he answered, "I shall not dine here to-night." Dining at home was with him a very simple affair, and a somewhat lonely one, and he avoided it almost nightly by indulging himself in a more expensive fashion.

But even as he spoke an idea came to Stuart which made him reconsider his determination, and which struck him as so amusing, that he stopped pulling at his tie and smiled delightedly at himself in the glass before him.

"Yes," he said, still smiling, "I will dine here to-night. Get me anything in a hurry. You need not wait now; go get the dinner up as soon as possible."

The effect which the photograph of Miss Delamar had upon him, and the transformation it had accomplished in his room, had been as great as would have marked the presence there of the girl herself. While considering this it had come to Stuart, like a flash of inspiration, that here was a way by which he could test the responsibilities and conditions of married life without compromising either himself or the girl to whom he would suppose himself to be married.

"I will put that picture at the head of the table," he said, "and I will play that it is she

herself, her own beautiful, lovely self, and I will talk to her and exchange views with her, and make her answer me just as she would were we actually married and settled." He looked at his watch and found it was just seven o'clock. "I will begin now," he said, "and I will keep up the delusion until midnight. To-night is the best time to try the experiment, because the picture is new now, and its influence will be all the more real. In a few weeks it may have lost some of its freshness and reality and will have become one of the fixtures in the room."

Stuart decided that under these new conditions it would be more pleasant to dine at Delmonico's, and he was on the point of asking the Picture what she thought of it, when he remembered that while it had been possible for him to make a practise of dining at that place as a bachelor, he could not now afford so expensive a luxury, and he decided that he had better economize in that particular and go instead to one of the *table d'hôte* restaurants in the neighborhood. He regretted not having thought of this sooner, for he did not care to dine at a *table d'hôte* in evening dress, as in some places it rendered him conspicuous. So, sooner than have this happen he decided to dine at home, as he had originally intended when he

first thought of attempting this experiment, and then conducted the Picture in to dinner and placed her in an armchair facing him, with the candles full upon the face.

"Now this is something like," he exclaimed, joyously. "I can't imagine anything better than this. Here we are all to ourselves with no one to bother us, with no chaperon, or chaperon's husband either, which is generally worse. Why is it, my dear," he asked, gayly, in a tone he considered affectionate and husbandly, "that the attractive chaperons are always handicapped by such stupid husbands, and vice versa?"

"If that is true," replied the Picture, or replied Stuart, rather, for the Picture, "I cannot be a very attractive chaperon." Stuart bowed politely at this, and then considered the point it had raised as to whether he had, in assuming both characters, the right to pay himself compliments. He decided against himself in this particular instance, but agreed that he was not responsible for anything the Picture might say, so long as he sincerely and fairly tried to make it answer him as he thought the original would do under like circumstances. From what he knew of the original under other conditions, he decided that he could give a very close imitation of her point of view.

Stuart's interest in his dinner was so real that he found himself neglecting his wife, and he had to pull himself up to his duty with a sharp reproof. After smiling back at her for a moment or two until his servant had again left them alone, he asked her to tell him what she had been doing during the day.

"Oh, nothing very important," said the Picture. "I went shopping in the morning and——"

Stuart stopped himself and considered this last remark doubtfully. "Now, how do I know she would go shopping?" he asked himself. "People from Harlem and women who like bargain-counters, and who eat chocolate meringue for lunch, and then stop in at a continuous performance, go shopping. It must be the comic-paper sort of wives who go about matching shades and buying hooks and eyes. Yes, I must have made Miss Delamar's understudy misrepresent her. I beg your pardon, my dear," he said aloud to the Picture. "You did *not* go shopping this morning. You probably went to a woman's luncheon somewhere. Tell me about that."

"Oh, yes, I went to lunch with the Antwerps," said the Picture, "and they had that Russian woman there who is getting up subscriptions for the Siberian prisoners. It's rather

fine of her, because it exiles her from Russia. And she is a princess."

"That's nothing," Stuart interrupted; "they're all princesses when you see them on Broadway."

"I beg your pardon," said the Picture.

"It's of no consequence," said Stuart, apologetically, "it's a comic song. I forgot you didn't like comic songs. Well—go on."

"Oh, then I went to a tea, and then I stopped in to hear Madame Ruvier read a paper on the Ethics of Ibsen, and she——"

Stuart's voice had died away gradually, and he caught himself wondering whether he had told George to lay in a fresh supply of cigars. "I beg your pardon," he said, briskly, "I was listening, but I was just wondering whether I had any cigars left. You were saying that you had been at Madame Ruvier's, and——"

"I am afraid that you were not interested," said the Picture. "Never mind, it's my fault. Sometimes I think I ought to do things of more interest, so that I should have something to talk to you about when you come home."

Stuart wondered at what hour he would come home now that he was married. As a bachelor he had been in the habit of stopping on his way up-town from the law-office at the club, or to take tea at the houses of the different

girls he liked. Of course he could not do that now as a married man. He would instead have to limit his calls to married women, as all the other married men of his acquaintance did. But at the moment he could not think of any attractive married women who would like his dropping in on them in such a familiar manner, and the other sort did not as yet appeal to him.

He seated himself in front of the coal fire in the library, with the Picture in a chair close beside him, and as he puffed pleasantly on his cigar he thought how well this suited him, and how delightful it was to find content in so simple and continuing a pleasure. He could almost feel the pressure of his wife's hand as it lay in his own, as they sat in silent sympathy looking into the friendly glow of the fire.

There was a long, pleasant pause.

"They're giving Sloane a dinner to-night at the 'Travellers'," Stuart said, at last, "in honor of his going to Abyssinia."

Stuart pondered for some short time as to what sort of a reply Miss Delamar's understudy ought to make to this innocent remark. He recalled the fact that on numerous occasions the original had shown not only a lack of knowledge of far-away places, but, what was more trying, a lack of interest as well. For the moment he could not see her robbed of her

pretty environment and tramping through undiscovered countries at his side. So the Picture's reply, when it came, was strictly in keeping with several remarks which Miss Delamar herself had made to him in the past.

"Yes," said the Picture, politely, "and where is Abyssinia—in India, isn't it?"

"No, not exactly," corrected Stuart, mildly; "you pass it on your way to India, though, as you go through the Red Sea. Sloane is taking Winchesters with him and a double express and a 'five fifty.' He wants to test their penetration. I think myself that the express is the best, but he says Selous and Chanler think very highly of the Winchester. I don't know, I never shot a rhinoceros. The time I killed that elephant," he went on, pointing at two tusks that stood with some assegais in a corner, "I used an express, and I had to let go with both barrels. I suppose, though, if I'd needed a third shot, I'd have wished it was a Winchester. He was charging the smoke, you see, and I couldn't get away because I'd caught my foot—but I told you about that, didn't I?" Stuart interrupted himself to ask politely.

"Yes," said the Picture, cheerfully, "I remember it very well; it was very foolish of you."

Stuart straightened himself with a slightly injured air and avoided the Picture's eye. He

had been stopped midway in what was one of his favorite stories, and it took a brief space of time for him to recover himself, and to sink back again into the pleasant lethargy in which he had been basking.

"Still," he said, "I think the express is the better gun."

"Oh, is an 'express' a gun?" exclaimed the Picture, with sudden interest. "Of course, I might have known."

Stuart turned in his chair, and surveyed the Picture in some surprise. "But, my dear girl," he remonstrated, kindly, "why didn't you ask, if you didn't know what I was talking about? What did you suppose it was?"

"I didn't know," said the Picture; "I thought it was something to do with his luggage. Abyssinia sounds so far away," she explained, smiling sweetly. "You can't expect one to be interested in such queer places, can you?"

"No," Stuart answered, reluctantly, and looking steadily at the fire, "I suppose not. But you see, my dear," he said, "I'd have gone with him if I hadn't married you, and so I am naturally interested in his outfit. They wanted me to make a comparative study of the little semi-independent states down there, and of how far the Italian Government allows them to rule themselves. That's what I was to have done."

But the Picture hastened to reassure him. "Oh, you mustn't think," she exclaimed, quickly, "that I mean to keep you at home. I love to travel, too. I want you to go on exploring places just as you've always done, only now I will go with you. We might do the Cathedral towns, for instance."

"The what?" gasped Stuart, raising his head. "Oh, yes, of course," he added, hurriedly, sinking back into his chair with a slightly bewildered expression. "That would be very nice. Perhaps your mother would like to go, too; it's not a dangerous expedition, is it? I *was* thinking of taking you on a trip through the South Seas—but I suppose the Cathedral towns are just as exciting. Or we might even penetrate as far into the interior as the English lakes and read Wordsworth and Coleridge as we go."

Miss Delamar's understudy observed him closely for a moment, but he made no sign, and so she turned her eyes again to the fire with a slightly troubled look. She had not a strong sense of humor, but she was very beautiful.

Stuart's conscience troubled him for the next few moments, and he endeavored to make up for his impatience of the moment before by telling the Picture how particularly well she was looking.

"It seems almost selfish to keep it all to myself," he mused.

"You don't mean," inquired the Picture, with tender anxiety, "that you want any one else here, do you? I'm sure I could be content to spend every evening like this. I've had enough of going out and talking to people I don't care about. Two seasons," she added, with the superior air of one who has put away childish things, "was quite enough of it for me."

"Well, I never took it as seriously as that," said Stuart, "but, of course, I don't want any one else here to spoil our evening. It is perfect."

He assured himself that it *was* perfect, but he wondered what was the loyal thing for a married couple to do when the conversation came to a dead stop. And did the conversation come to a stop because they preferred to sit in silent sympathy and communion, or because they had nothing interesting to talk about? Stuart doubted if silence was the truest expression of the most perfect confidence and sympathy. He generally found when he was interested, that either he or his companion talked all the time. It was when he was bored that he sat silent. But it was probably different with married people. Possibly they thought of each other during these pauses, and of their

own affairs and interests, and then he asked himself how many interests could one fairly retain with which the other had nothing to do?

"I suppose," thought Stuart, "that I had better compromise and read aloud. Should you like me to read aloud?" he asked, doubtfully.

The Picture brightened perceptibly at this, and said that she thought that would be charming. "We might make it quite instructive," she suggested, entering eagerly into the idea. "We ought to agree to read so many pages every night. Suppose we begin with Guizot's 'History of France.' I have always meant to read that, the illustrations look so interesting."

"Yes, we might do that," assented Stuart, doubtfully. "It is in six volumes, isn't it? Suppose now, instead," he suggested, with an impartial air, "we begin that to-morrow night, and go this evening to see Seldon's new play, 'The Fool and His Money.' It's not too late, and he has saved a box for us, and Weimer and Rives and Sloane will be there, and——"

The Picture's beautiful face settled for just an instant in an expression of disappointment. "Of course," she replied, slowly, "if you wish it. But I thought you said," she went on with a sweet smile, "that this was perfect.

Now you want to go out again. Isn't this better than a hot theatre? You might put up with it for one evening, don't you think?"

"Put up with it!" exclaimed Stuart, enthusiastically; "I could spend every evening so. It was only a suggestion. It wasn't that I wanted to go so much as that I thought Seldon might be a little hurt if I didn't. But I can tell him you were not feeling very well, and that we will come some other evening. He generally likes to have us there on the first night, that's all. But he'll understand."

"Oh," said the Picture, "if you put it in the light of a duty to your friend, of course we will go."

"Not at all," replied Stuart, heartily; "I will read something. I should really prefer it. How would you like something of Browning's?"

"Oh, I read all of Browning once," said the Picture. "I think I should like something new."

Stuart gasped at this, but said nothing, and began turning over the books on the centre-table. He selected one of the monthly magazines, and choosing a story which neither of them had read, sat down comfortably in front of the fire, and finished it without interruption and to the satisfaction of the Picture and himself. The story had made the half hour pass

very pleasantly, and they both commented on it with interest.

"I had an experience once myself something like that," said Stuart, with a pleased smile of recollection; "it happened in Paris"—he began with the deliberation of a man who is sure of his story—"and it turned out in much the same way. It didn't begin in Paris; it really began while we were crossing the English Channel to——"

"Oh, you mean about the Russian who took you for some one else and had you followed," said the Picture. "Yes, that was like it, except that in your case nothing happened."

Stuart took his cigar from between his lips and frowned severely at the lighted end for some little time before he spoke.

"My dear," he remonstrated, gently, "you mustn't tell me I've told you all my old stories before. It isn't fair. Now that I am married, you see, I can't go about and have new experiences, and I've got to make use of the old ones."

"Oh, I'm so sorry," exclaimed the Picture, remorsefully. "I didn't mean to be rude. Please tell me about it. I should like to hear it again, ever so much. I *should* like to hear it again, really."

"Nonsense," said Stuart, laughing and shak-

ing his head. "I was only joking; personally I hate people who tell long stories. That doesn't matter. I was thinking of something else."

He continued thinking of something else, which was, that though he had been in jest when he spoke of having given up the chance of meeting fresh experiences, he had nevertheless described a condition, and a painfully true one. His real life seemed to have stopped, and he saw himself in the future looking back and referring to it, as though it were the career of an entirely different person, of a young man, with quick sympathies which required satisfying, as any appetite requires food. And he had an uncomfortable doubt that these many ever-ready sympathies would rebel if fed on only one diet.

The Picture did not interrupt him in his thoughts, and he let his mind follow his eyes as they wandered over the objects above him on the mantel-shelf. They all meant something from the past—a busy, wholesome past which had formed habits of thought and action, habits he could no longer enjoy alone, and which, on the other hand, it was quite impossible for him to share with any one else. He was no longer to be alone.

Stuart stirred uneasily in his chair and poked at the fire before him.

"Do you remember the day you came to see me," said the Picture, sentimentally, "and built the fire yourself and lighted some girl's letters to make it burn?"

"Yes," said Stuart, "that is, I *said* that they were some girl's letters. It made it more picturesque. I am afraid they were bills. I should say I did remember it," he continued, enthusiastically. "You wore a black dress and little red slippers with big black rosettes, and you looked as beautiful as—as night—as a moonlight night."

The Picture frowned slightly.

"You are always telling me about how I looked," she complained; "can't you remember any time when we were together without remembering what I had on and how I appeared?"

"I cannot," said Stuart, promptly. "I can recall lots of other things besides, but I can't forget how you looked. You have a fashion of emphasizing episodes in that way which is entirely your own. But, as I say, I can remember something else. Do you remember, for instance, when we went up to West Point on that yacht? Wasn't it a grand day, with the autumn leaves on both sides of the Hudson, and the dress parade, and the dance afterward at the hotel?"

"Yes, I should think I did," said the Picture, smiling. "You spent all your time examining cannon, and talking to the men about 'firing in open order,' and left me all alone."

"Left you all alone! I like that," laughed Stuart; "all alone with about eighteen officers."

"Well, but that was natural," returned the Picture. "They were men. It's natural for a girl to talk to men, but why should a man want to talk to men?"

"Well, I know better than that now," said Stuart.

He proceeded to show that he knew better by remaining silent for the next half hour, during which time he continued to wonder whether this effort to keep up a conversation was not radically wrong. He thought of several things he might say, but he argued that it was an impossible situation where a man had to make conversation with his own wife.

The clock struck ten as he sat waiting, and he moved uneasily in his chair.

"What is it?" asked the Picture; "what makes you so restless?"

Stuart regarded the Picture timidly for a moment before he spoke. "I was just thinking," he said, doubtfully, "that we might run down after all, and take a look in at the last act; it's not too late even now. They're sure

to run behind on the first night. And then," he urged, "we can go around and see Seldon. You have never been behind the scenes, have you? It's very interesting."

"No, I have not; but if we do," remonstrated the Picture, pathetically, "you *know* all those men will come trooping home with us. You know they will."

"But that's very complimentary," said Stuart. "Why, I like my friends to like my wife."

"Yes, but you know how they stay when they get here," she answered; "I don't believe they ever sleep. Don't you remember the last supper you gave me before we were married, when Mrs. Starr and you all were discussing Mr. Seldon's play? She didn't make a move to go until half-past two, and I was *that* sleepy I couldn't keep my eyes open."

"Yes," said Stuart, "I remember. I'm sorry. I thought it was very interesting. Seldon changed the whole second act on account of what she said. Well, after this," he laughed with cheerful desperation, "I think I shall make up for the part of a married man in a pair of slippers and a dressing-gown, and then perhaps I won't be tempted to roam abroad at night."

"You must wear the gown they are going to give you at Oxford," said the Picture, smiling

placidly. "The one Aunt Lucy was telling me about. Why do they give you a gown?" she asked. "It seems such an odd thing to do."

"The gown comes with the degree, I believe," said Stuart.

"But why do they give *you* a degree?" persisted the Picture; "you never studied at Oxford, did you?"

Stuart moved slightly in his chair and shook his head. "I thought I told you," he said, gently. "No, I never studied there. I wrote some books on—things, and they liked them."

"Oh, yes, I remember now, you did tell me," said the Picture; "and I told Aunt Lucy about it, and said we would be in England during the season when you got your degree, and she said you must be awfully clever to get it. You see—she does appreciate you, and you always treat her so distantly."

"Do I?" said Stuart, quietly. "I'm sorry."

"Will you have your portrait painted in it?" asked the Picture.

"In what?"

"In the gown. You are not listening," said the Picture, reproachfully. "You ought to. Aunt Lucy says it's a beautiful shade of red silk, and very long. Is it?"

"I don't know," said Stuart. He shook his head, and dropping his chin into his hands,

stared coldly down into the fire. He tried to persuade himself that he had been vainglorious, and that he had given too much weight to the honor which the University of Oxford would bestow upon him; that he had taken the degree too seriously, and that the Picture's view of it was the view of the rest of the world. But he could not convince himself that he was entirely at fault.

"Is it too late to begin on Guizot?" suggested his Picture, as an alternative to his plan. "It sounds so improving."

"Yes, it is much too late," answered Stuart, decidedly. "Besides, I don't want to be improved. I want to be amused, or inspired, or scolded. The chief good of friends is that they do one of these three things, and a wife should do all three."

"Which shall I do?" asked the Picture, smiling good-humoredly.

Stuart looked at the beautiful face and at the reclining figure of the woman to whom he was to turn for sympathy for the rest of his life, and felt a cold shiver of terror, that passed as quickly as it came. He reached out his hand and placed it on the arm of the chair where his wife's hand should have been, and patted the place kindly. He would shut his eyes to everything but that she was good and

sweet and his wife. Whatever else she lacked that her beauty had covered up and hidden, and the want of which had lain unsuspected in their previous formal intercourse, could not be mended now. He would settle his step to hers, and eliminate all those interests from his life which were not hers as well. He had chosen a beautiful idol, and not a companion, for a wife. He had tried to warm his hands at the fire of a diamond.

Stuart's eyes closed wearily as though to shut out the memories of the past, or the foreknowledge of what the future was sure to be. His head sank forward on his breast, and with his hand shading his eyes, he looked beyond, through the dying fire, into the succeeding years.

The gay little French clock on the table sounded the hour of midnight briskly, with a pert, insistent clamor, and at the same instant a boisterous and unruly knocking answered it from outside the library door.

Stuart rose uncertainly from his chair and surveyed the tiny clock face with a startled expression of bewilderment and relief.

"Stuart!" his friends called impatiently from the hall. "Stuart, let us in!" and without waiting further for recognition a merry company of

gentlemen pushed their way noisily into the room.

"Where the devil have you been?" demanded Weimer. "You don't deserve to be spoken to at all after quitting us like that. But Seldon is so good-natured," he went on, "that he sent us after you. It was a great success, and he made a rattling good speech, and you missed the whole thing; and you ought to be ashamed of yourself. We've asked half the people in front to supper—two stray Englishmen, all the Wilton girls and their governor, and the chap that wrote the play. And Seldon and his brother Sam are coming as soon as they get their make-up off. Don't stand there like that, but hurry. What have you been doing?"

Stuart gave a nervous, anxious laugh. "Oh, don't ask me," he cried. "It was awful. I've been trying an experiment, and I had to keep it up until midnight, and—I'm so glad you fellows have come," he continued, halting midway in his explanation. "I *was* blue."

"You've been asleep in front of the fire," said young Sloane, "and you've been dreaming."

"Perhaps," laughed Stuart, gayly, "perhaps. But I'm awake now, in any event. Sloane, old man," he cried, dropping both hands on the

youngster's shoulders, "how much money have you? Enough to take me to Gibraltar? They can cable me the rest."

"Hoorah!" shouted Sloane, waltzing from one end of the room to the other. "And we're off to Ab-yss-in-ia in the morn-ing," he sang. "There's plenty in my money belt," he cried, slapping his side; "you can hear the ten-pound notes crackle whenever I breathe, and it's all yours, my dear boy, and welcome. And I'll prove to you that the Winchester is the better gun."

"All right," returned Stuart, gayly, "and I'll try to prove that the Italians don't know how to govern a native state. But who is giving this supper, anyway?" he demanded. "That is the main thing—that's what I want to know."

"You've got to pack, haven't you?" suggested Rives.

"I'll pack when I get back," said Stuart, struggling into his greatcoat, and searching in his pockets for his gloves. "Besides, my things are always ready and there's plenty of time; the boat doesn't leave for six hours yet."

"We'll all come back and help," said Weimer.

"Then I'll never get away," laughed Stuart. He was radiant, happy, and excited, like a boy back from school for the holidays. But when

they had reached the pavement, he halted and ran his hand down into his pocket, as though feeling for his latch-key, and stood looking doubtfully at his friends.

"What is it now?" asked Rives, impatiently. "Have you forgotten something?"

Stuart looked back at the front door in momentary indecision.

"Ye-es," he answered. "I did forget something. But it doesn't matter," he added, cheerfully, taking Sloane's arm.

"Come on," he said, "and so Seldon made a hit, did he? I am glad—and tell me, old man, how long will we have to wait at Gib for the P. & O.?"

Stuart's servant had heard the men trooping down the stairs, laughing and calling to one another as they went, and judging from this that they had departed for the night, he put out all the lights in the library and closed the piano, and lifted the windows to clear the room of the tobacco-smoke. He did not notice the beautiful photograph sitting upright in the armchair before the fireplace, and so left it alone in the deserted library.

The cold night-air swept in through the open window and chilled the silent room, and the dead coals in the grate dropped one by one into the fender with a dismal echoing clatter; but

the Picture still sat in the armchair with the same graceful pose and the same lovely expression, and smiled sweetly at the encircling darkness.

THE REPORTER WHO MADE HIMSELF KING

The Old Time Journalist will tell you that the best reporter is the one who works his way up. He holds that the only way to start is as a printer's devil or as an office boy, to learn in time to set type, to graduate from a compositor into a stenographer, and as a stenographer take down speeches at public meetings, and so finally grow into a real reporter, with a fire badge on your left suspender, and a speaking acquaintance with all the greatest men in the city, not even excepting Police Captains.

That is the old time journalist's idea of it. That is the way he was trained, and that is why at the age of sixty he is still a reporter. If you train up a youth in this way, he will go into reporting with too full a knowledge of the newspaper business, with no illusions concerning it, and with no ignorant enthusiasms, but with a keen and justifiable impression that he is not paid enough for what he does. And he will only do what he is paid to do.

Now, you cannot pay a good reporter for what he does, because he does not work for pay. He works for his paper. He gives his time, his health, his brains, his sleeping hours, and his eating hours, and sometimes his life, to get news for it. He thinks the sun rises only that men may have light by which to read it. But if he has been in a newspaper office from his youth up, he finds out before he becomes a reporter that this is not so, and loses his real value. He should come right out of the University where he has been doing "campus notes" for the college weekly, and be pitchforked out into city work without knowing whether the Battery is at Harlem or Hunter's Point, and with the idea that he is a Moulder of Public Opinion and that the Power of the Press is greater than the Power of Money, and that the few lines he writes are of more value in the Editor's eyes than is the column of advertising on the last page, which they are not.

After three years—it is sometimes longer, sometimes not so long—he finds out that he has given his nerves and his youth and his enthusiasm in exchange for a general fund of miscellaneous knowledge, the opportunity of personal encounter with all the greatest and most remarkable men and events that have risen in those three years, and a great fund of resource and

patience. He will find that he has crowded the experiences of the lifetime of the ordinary young business man, doctor, or lawyer, or man about town, into three short years; that he has learned to think and to act quickly, to be patient and unmoved when every one else has lost his head, actually or figuratively speaking; to write as fast as another man can talk, and to be able to talk with authority on matters of which other men do not venture even to think until they have read what he has written with a copy-boy at his elbow on the night previous.

It is necessary for you to know this, that you may understand what manner of man young Albert Gordon was.

Young Gordon had been a reporter just three years. He had left Yale when his last living relative died, and had taken the morning train for New York, where they had promised him reportorial work on one of the innumerable Greatest New York Dailies. He arrived at the office at noon, and was sent back over the same road on which he had just come, to Spuyten Duyvil, where a train had been wrecked and everybody of consequence to suburban New York killed. One of the old reporters hurried him to the office again with his "copy," and after he had delivered that, he was sent to the Tombs to talk French to a man in Murderers'

Row, who could not talk anything else, but who had shown some international skill in the use of a jimmy. And at eight, he covered a flower-show in Madison Square Garden; and at eleven was sent over the Brooklyn Bridge in a cab to watch a fire and make guesses at the losses to the insurance companies.

He went to bed at one, and dreamed of shattered locomotives, human beings lying still with blankets over them, rows of cells, and banks of beautiful flowers nodding their heads to the tunes of the brass band in the gallery. He decided when he awoke the next morning that he had entered upon a picturesque and exciting career, and as one day followed another, he became more and more convinced of it, and more and more devoted to it. He was twenty then, and he was now twenty-three, and in that time had become a great reporter, and had been to Presidential conventions in Chicago, revolutions in Hayti, Indian outbreaks on the Plains, and midnight meetings of moonlighters in Tennessee, and had seen what work earthquakes, floods, fire, and fever could do in great cities, and had contradicted the President, and borrowed matches from burglars. And now he thought he would like to rest and breathe a bit, and not to work again unless as a war correspondent. The only obstacle to his

becoming a great war correspondent lay in the fact that there was no war, and a war correspondent without a war is about as absurd an individual as a general without an army. He read the papers every morning on the elevated trains for war clouds; but though there were many war clouds, they always drifted apart, and peace smiled again. This was very disappointing to young Gordon, and he became more and more keenly discouraged.

And then as war work was out of the question, he decided to write his novel. It was to be a novel of New York life, and he wanted a quiet place in which to work on it. He was already making inquiries among the suburban residents of his acquaintance for just such a quiet spot, when he received an offer to go to the Island of Opeki in the North Pacific Ocean, as secretary to the American consul at that place. The gentleman who had been appointed by the President to act as consul at Opeki was Captain Leonard T. Travis, a veteran of the Civil War, who had contracted a severe attack of rheumatism while camping out at night in the dew, and who on account of this souvenir of his efforts to save the Union had allowed the Union he had saved to support him in one office or another ever since. He had met young Gordon at a dinner, and had had the presumption to ask

him to serve as his secretary, and Gordon, much to his surprise, had accepted his offer. The idea of a quiet life in the tropics with new and beautiful surroundings, and with nothing to do and plenty of time in which to do it, and to write his novel besides, seemed to Albert to be just what he wanted; and though he did not know nor care much for his superior officer, he agreed to go with him promptly, and proceeded to say good-by to his friends and to make his preparations. Captain Travis was so delighted with getting such a clever young gentleman for his secretary, that he referred to him to his friends as "my attaché of legation"; nor did he lessen that gentleman's dignity by telling any one that the attaché's salary was to be five hundred dollars a year. His own salary was only fifteen hundred dollars; and though his brother-in-law, Senator Rainsford, tried his best to get the amount raised, he was unsuccessful. The consulship to Opeki was instituted early in the '50's, to get rid of and reward a third or fourth cousin of the President's, whose services during the campaign were important, but whose after-presence was embarrassing. He had been created consul to Opeki as being more distant and unaccessible than any other known spot, and had lived and died there; and so little was known of the island, and so

difficult was communication with it, that no one knew he was dead, until Captain Travis, in his hungry haste for office, had uprooted the sad fact. Captain Travis, as well as Albert, had a secondary reason for wishing to visit Opeki. His physician had told him to go to some warm climate for his rheumatism, and in accepting the consulship his object was rather to follow out his doctor's orders at his country's expense, than to serve his country at the expense of his rheumatism.

Albert could learn but very little of Opeki; nothing, indeed, but that it was situated about one hundred miles from the Island of Octavia, which island, in turn, was simply described as a coaling-station three hundred miles distant from the coast of California. Steamers from San Francisco to Yokohama stopped every third week at Octavia, and that was all that either Captain Travis or his secreatry could learn of their new home. This was so very little, that Albert stipulated to stay only as long as he liked it, and to return to the States within a few months if he found such a change of plan desirable.

As he was going to what was an almost undiscovered country, he thought it would be advisable to furnish himself with a supply of articles with which he might trade with the native

Opekians, and for this purpose he purchased a large quantity of brass rods, because he had read that Stanley did so, and added to these brass curtain-chains, and about two hundred leaden medals similar to those sold by street peddlers during the Constitutional Centennial Celebration in New York City.

He also collected even more beautiful but less expensive decorations for Christmas-trees, at a wholesale house on Park Row. These he hoped to exchange for furs or feathers or weapons, or for whatever other curious and valuable trophies the Island of Opeki boasted. He already pictured his rooms on his return hung fantastically with crossed spears and boomerangs, feather head-dresses, and ugly idols.

His friends told him that he was doing a very foolish thing, and argued that once out of the newspaper world, it would be hard to regain his place in it. But he thought the novel that he would write while lost to the world at Opeki would serve to make up for his temporary absence from it, and he expressly and impressively stipulated that the editor should wire him if there was a war.

Captain Travis and his secretary crossed the continent without adventure, and took passage from San Francisco on the first steamer that touched at Octavia. They reached that island

in three days, and learned with some concern that there was no regular communication with Opeki, and that it would be necessary to charter a sailboat for the trip. Two fishermen agreed to take them and their trunks, and to get them to their destination within sixteen hours if the wind held good. It was a most unpleasant sail. The rain fell with calm, relentless persistence from what was apparently a clear sky; the wind tossed the waves as high as the mast and made Captain Travis ill; and as there was no deck to the big boat, they were forced to huddle up under pieces of canvas, and talked but little. Captain Travis complained of frequent twinges of rheumatism, and gazed forlornly over the gunwale at the empty waste of water.

"If I've got to serve a term of imprisonment on a rock in the middle of the ocean for four years," he said, "I might just as well have done something first to deserve it. This is a pretty way to treat a man who bled for his country. This is gratitude, this is." Albert pulled heavily on his pipe, and wiped the rain and spray from his face and smiled.

"Oh, it won't be so bad when we get there," he said; "they say these Southern people are always hospitable, and the whites will be glad to see any one from the States."

"There will be a round of diplomatic dinners," said the consul, with an attempt at cheerfulness. "I have brought two uniforms to wear at them."

It was seven o'clock in the evening when the rain ceased, and one of the black, half-naked fishermen nodded and pointed at a little low line on the horizon.

"Opeki," he said. The line grew in length until it proved to be an island with great mountains rising to the clouds, and, as they drew nearer and nearer, showed a level coast running back to the foot of the mountains and covered with a forest of palms. They next made out a village of thatched huts around a grassy square, and at some distance from the village a wooden structure with a tin roof.

"I wonder where the town is?" asked the consul, with a nervous glance at the fishermen. One of them told him that what he saw was the town.

"That?" gasped the consul. "Is that where all the people on the island live?"

The fisherman nodded; but the other added that there were other natives further back in the mountains, but that they were bad men who fought and ate each other. The consul and his attaché of legation gazed at the mountains with unspoken misgivings. They were

quite near now, and could see an immense crowd of men and women, all of them black, and clad but in the simplest garments, waiting to receive them. They seemed greatly excited and ran in and out of the huts, and up and down the beach, as wildly as so many black ants. But in the front of the group they distinguished three men who they could see were white, though they were clothed, like the others, simply in a shirt and a short pair of trousers. Two of these three suddenly sprang away on a run and disappeared among the palm-trees; but the third one, when he recognized the American flag in the halyards, threw his straw hat in the water and began turning handsprings over the sand.

"That young gentleman, at least," said Albert, gravely, "seems pleased to see us."

A dozen of the natives sprang into the water and came wading and swimming toward them, grinning and shouting and swinging their arms.

"I don't think it's quite safe, do you?" said the consul, looking out wildly to the open sea. "You see, they don't know who I am."

A great black giant threw one arm over the gunwale and shouted something that sounded as if it were spelt Owah, Owah, as the boat carried him through the surf.

"How do you do?" said Gordon, doubtfully. The boat shook the giant off under the wave and beached itself so suddenly that the American consul was thrown forward to his knees. Gordon did not wait to pick him up, but jumped out and shook hands with the young man who had turned handsprings, while the natives gathered about them in a circle and chatted and laughed in delighted excitement.

"I'm awfully glad to see you," said the young man, eagerly. "My name's Stedman. I'm from New Haven, Connecticut. Where are you from?"

"New York," said Albert. "This," he added, pointing solemnly to Captain Travis, who was still on his knees in the boat, "is the American consul to Opeki." The American consul to Opeki gave a wild look at Mr. Stedman of New Haven and at the natives.

"See here, young man," he gasped, "is this all there is of Opeki?"

"The American consul?" said young Stedman, with a gasp of amazement, and looking from Albert to Captain Travis. "Why, I never supposed they would send another here; the last one died about fifteen years ago, and there hasn't been one since. I've been living in the consul's office with the Bradleys, but I'll move out, of course. I'm sure I'm awfully glad to

see you. It'll make it so much more pleasant for me."

"Yes," said Captain Travis, bitterly, as he lifted his rheumatic leg over the boat; "that's why we came."

Mr. Stedman did not notice this. He was too much pleased to be anything but hospitable. "You are soaking wet, aren't you?" he said; "and hungry, I guess. You come right over to the consul's office and get on some other things."

He turned to the natives and gave some rapid orders in their language, and some of them jumped into the boat at this, and began to lift out the trunks, and others ran off toward a large, stout old native, who was sitting gravely on a log, smoking, with the rain beating unnoticed on his gray hair.

"They've gone to tell the King," said Stedman; "but you'd better get something to eat first, and then I'll be happy to present you properly."

"The King," said Captain Travis, with some awe; "is there a king?"

"I never saw a king," Gordon remarked, "and I'm sure I never expected to see one sitting on a log in the rain."

"He's a very good king," said Stedman, confidentially; "and though you mightn't think

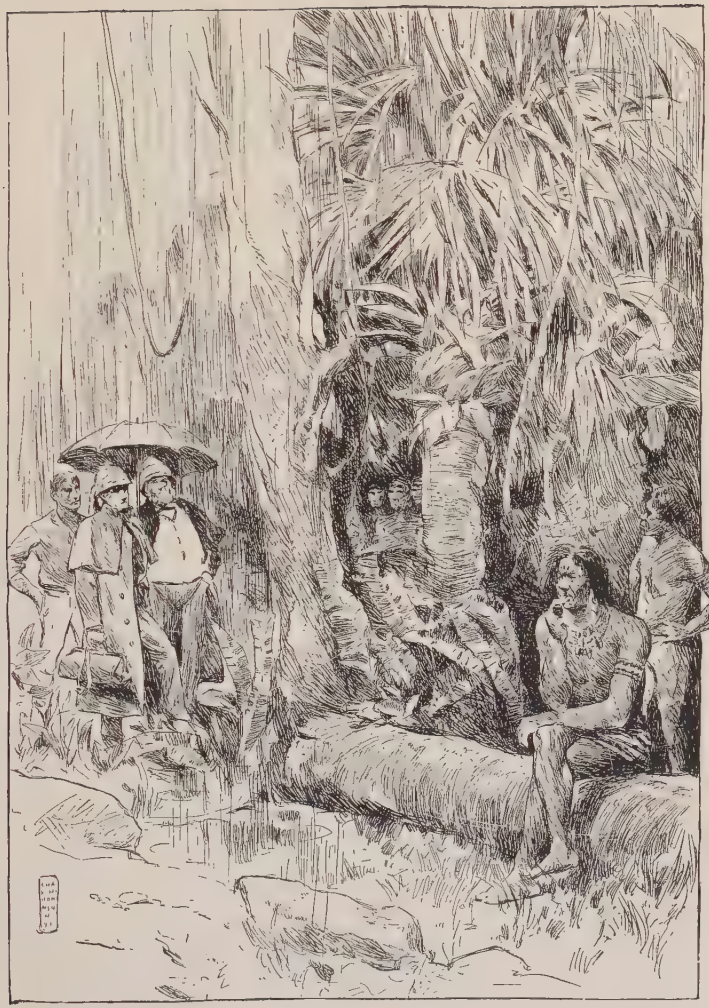
it to look at him, he's a terrible stickler for etiquette and form. After supper he'll give you an audience; and if you have any tobacco, you had better give him some as a present, and you'd better say it's from the President: he doesn't like to take presents from common people, he's so proud. The only reason he borrows mine is because he thinks I'm the President's son."

"What makes him think that?" demanded the consul, with some shortness. Young Mr. Stedman looked nervously at the consul and at Albert, and said that he guessed some one must have told him.

The consul's office was divided into four rooms with an open court in the middle, filled with palms, and watered somewhat unnecessarily by a fountain.

"I made that," said Stedman, in a modest, offhand way. "I made it out of hollow bamboo reeds connected with a spring. And now I'm making one for the King. He saw this and had a lot of bamboo sticks put up all over the town, without any underground connections, and couldn't make out why the water wouldn't spurt out of them. And because mine spurts, he thinks I'm a magician."

"I suppose," grumbled the consul, "some one told him that too."



"I never saw a king," Gordon remarked.

"I suppose so," said Mr. Stedman, uneasily.

There was a veranda around the consul's office, and inside the walls were hung with skins, and pictures from illustrated papers, and there was a good deal of bamboo furniture, and four broad, cool-looking beds. The place was as clean as a kitchen. "I made the furniture," said Stedman, "and the Bradleys keep the place in order."

"Who are the Bradleys?" asked Albert.

"The Bradleys are those two men you saw with me," said Stedman; "they deserted from a British man-of-war that stopped here for coal, and they act as my servants. One is Bradley, Sr., and the other Bradley, Jr."

"Then vessels do stop here occasionally?" the consul said, with a pleased smile.

"Well, not often," said Stedman. "Not so very often; about once a year. The Nelson thought this was Octavia, and put off again as soon as she found out her mistake, but the Bradleys took to the bush, and the boat's crew couldn't find them. When they saw your flag, they thought you might mean to send them back, so they ran off to hide again; they'll be back, though, when they get hungry."

The supper young Stedman spread for his guests, as he still treated them, was very refreshing and very good. There was cold fish

and pigeon pie, and a hot omelet filled with mushrooms and olives and tomatoes and onions all sliced up together, and strong black coffee. After supper, Stedman went off to see the King, and came back in a little while to say that his Majesty would give them an audience the next day after breakfast. "It is too dark now," Stedman explained; "and it's raining so that they can't make the street-lamps burn. Did you happen to notice our lamps? I invented them; but they don't work very well yet. I've got the right idea, though, and I'll soon have the town illuminated all over, whether it rains or not."

The consul had been very silent and indifferent, during supper, to all around him. Now he looked up with some show of interest.

"How much longer is it going to rain, do you think?" he asked.

"Oh, I don't know," said Stedman, critically. "Not more than two months, I should say." The consul rubbed his rheumatic leg and sighed, but said nothing.

The Bradleys returned about ten o'clock, and came in very sheepishly. The consul had gone off to pay the boatmen who had brought them, and Albert in his absence assured the sailors that there was not the least danger of their being sent away. Then he turned into

one of the beds, and Stedman took one in another room, leaving the room he had occupied heretofore for the consul. As he was saying good-night, Albert suggested that he had not yet told them how he came to be on a deserted island; but Stedman only laughed and said that that was a long story, and that he would tell him all about it in the morning. So Albert went off to bed without waiting for the consul to return, and fell asleep, wondering at the strangeness of his new life, and assuring himself that if the rain only kept up, he would have his novel finished in a month.

The sun was shining brightly when he awoke, and the palm-trees outside were nodding gracefully in a warm breeze. From the court came the odor of strange flowers, and from the window he could see the ocean brilliantly blue, and with the sun coloring the spray that beat against the coral reefs on the shore.

"Well, the consul can't complain of this," he said, with a laugh of satisfaction; and pulling on a bath-robe, he stepped into the next room to awaken Captain Travis. But the room was quite empty, and the bed undisturbed. The consul's trunk remained just where it had been placed near the door, and on it lay a large sheet of foolscap, with writing on it, and addressed at the top to Albert Gordon. The handwriting

was the consul's. Albert picked it up and read it with much anxiety. It began abruptly

The fishermen who brought us to this forsaken spot tell me that it rains here six months in the year, and that this is the first month. I came here to serve my country, for which I fought and bled, but I did not come here to die of rheumatism and pneumonia. I can serve my country better by staying alive; and whether it rains or not, I don't like it. I have been grossly deceived, and I am going back. Indeed, by the time you get this, I will be on my return trip, as I intend leaving with the men who brought us here as soon as they can get the sail up. My cousin, Senator Rainsford, can fix it all right with the President, and can have me recalled in proper form after I get back. But of course it would not do for me to leave my post with no one to take my place, and no one could be more ably fitted to do so than yourself; so I feel no compunctions at leaving you behind. I hereby, therefore, accordingly appoint you my substitute with full power to act, to collect all fees, sign all papers, and attend to all matters pertaining to your office as American consul, and I trust you will worthily uphold the name of that country and government which it has always been my pleasure and duty to serve.

Your sincere friend and superior officer,

LEONARD T. TRAVIS.

P. S. I did not care to disturb you by moving my trunk, so I left it, and you can make what use you please of whatever it contains, as I shall not want tropical garments where I am going. What you will need most, I think, is a waterproof and umbrella.

P. S. Look out for that young man Stedman. He is too inventive. I hope you will like your high office; but as for myself, I am satisfied with little old New York. Opeki is just a bit too far from civilization to suit me.

Albert held the letter before him and read it over again before he moved. Then he jumped to the window. The boat was gone, and there was not a sign of it on the horizon.

"The miserable old hypocrite!" he cried, half angry and half laughing. "If he thinks I am going to stay here alone he is very greatly mistaken. And yet, why not?" he asked. He stopped soliloquizing and looked around him, thinking rapidly. As he stood there, Stedman came in from the other room, fresh and smiling from his morning's bath.

"Good-morning," he said, "where's the consul?"

"The consul," said Albert, gravely, "is before you. In me you see the American consul to Opeki.

"Captain Travis," Albert explained, "has returned to the United States. I suppose he feels that he can best serve his country by remaining on the spot. In case of another war, now, for instance, he would be there to save it again."

"And what are you going to do?" asked Stedman, anxiously. "You will not run away, too, will you?"

Albert said that he intended to remain where he was and perform his consular duties, to appoint him his secretary, and to elevate the

United States in the opinion of the Opekians above all other nations.

"They may not think much of the United States in England," he said; "but we are going to teach the people of Opeki that America is first on the map and that there is no second."

"I'm sure it's very good of you to make me your secretary," said Stedman, with some pride. "I hope I won't make any mistakes. What are the duties of a consul's secretary?"

"That," said Albert, "I do not know. But you are rather good at inventing, so you can invent a few. That should be your first duty and you should attend to it at once. I will have trouble enough finding work for myself. Your salary is five hundred dollars a year; and now," he continued briskly, "we want to prepare for this reception. We can tell the King that Travis was just a guard of honor for the trip, and that I have sent him back to tell the President of my safe arrival. That will keep the President from getting anxious. There is nothing," continued Albert, "like a uniform to impress people who live in the tropics, and Travis, it so happens, has two in his trunk. He intended to wear them on State occasions, and as I inherit the trunk and all that is in it, I intend to wear one of the uniforms, and you

can have the other. But I have first choice, because I am consul."

Captain Travis's consular outfit consisted of one full dress and one undress United States uniform. Albert put on the dress-coat over a pair of white flannel trousers, and looked remarkably brave and handsome. Stedman, who was only eighteen and quite thin, did not appear so well, until Albert suggested his padding out his chest and shoulders with towels. This made him rather warm, but helped his general appearance.

"The two Bradleys must dress up, too," said Albert. "I think they ought to act as a guard of honor, don't you? The only things I have are blazers and jerseys; but it doesn't much matter what they wear, as long as they dress alike."

He accordingly called in the two Bradleys, and gave them each a pair of the captain's rejected white duck trousers, and a blue jersey apiece, with a big white Y on it.

"The students of Yale gave me that," he said to the younger Bradley, "in which to play football, and a great man gave me the other. His name is Walter Camp; and if you rip or soil that jersey, I'll send you back to England in irons; so be careful."

Stedman gazed at his companions in their different costumes, doubtfully. "It reminds

me," he said, "of private theatricals. Of the time our church choir played 'Pinafore.'"

"Yes," assented Albert; "but I don't think we look quite gay enough. I tell you what we need—medals. You never saw a diplomat without a lot of decorations and medals."

"Well, I can fix that," Stedman said. "I've got a trunkful. I used to be the fastest bicycle-rider in Connecticut, and I've got all my prizes with me."

Albert said doubtfully that that wasn't exactly the sort of medal he meant.

"Perhaps not," returned Stedman, as he began fumbling in his trunk; "but the King won't know the difference. He couldn't tell a cross of the Legion of Honor from a medal for the tug of war."

So the bicycle medals, of which Stedman seemed to have an innumerable quantity, were strung in profusion over Albert's uniform, and in a lesser quantity over Stedman's; while a handful of leaden ones, those sold on the streets for the Constitutional Centennial, with which Albert had provided himself, were wrapped up in a red silk handkerchief for presentation to the King; with them Albert placed a number of brass rods and brass chains, much to Stedman's delighted approval.

"That is a very good idea," he said. "Demo-

cratic simplicity is the right thing at home, of course; but when you go abroad and mix with crowned heads, you want to show them that you know what's what."

"Well," said Albert, gravely, "I sincerely hope this crowned head don't know what's what. If he reads 'Connecticut Agricultural State Fair. One mile bicycle race. First Prize,' on this badge, when we are trying to make him believe it's a war medal, it may hurt his feelings."

Bradley, Jr., went ahead to announce the approach of the American embassy, which he did with so much manner that the King deferred the audience a half-hour, in order that he might better prepare to receive his visitors. When the audience did take place, it attracted the entire population to the green spot in front of the King's palace, and their delight and excitement over the appearance of the visitors was sincere and hearty. The King was too polite to appear much surprised, but he showed his delight over his presents as simply and openly as a child. Thrice he insisted on embracing Albert, and kissing him three times on the forehead, which, Stedman assured him in a side-whisper, was a great honor; an honor which was not extended to the secretary, although he was given a necklace of animals' claws instead, with which he was better satisfied.

After this reception, the embassy marched back to the consul's office, surrounded by an immense number of natives, some of whom ran ahead and looked back at them, and crowded so close that the two Bradleys had to poke at those nearest with their guns. The crowd remained outside the office even after the procession of four had disappeared, and cheered. This suggested to Gordon that this would be a good time to make a speech, which he accordingly did, Stedman translating it, sentence by sentence. At the conclusion of this effort, Albert distributed a number of brass rings among the married men present, which they placed on whichever finger fitted best, and departed delighted.

Albert had wished to give the rings to the married women, but Stedman pointed out to him that it would be much cheaper to give them to the married men; for while one woman could only have one husband, one man could have at least six wives.

"And now, Stedman," said Albert, after the mob had gone, "tell me what you are doing on this island."

"It's a very simple story," Stedman said. "I am the representative, or agent, or operator, for the Yokohama Cable Company. The Yokohama Cable Company is a company organized

in San Francisco, for the purpose of laying a cable to Yokohama. It is a stock company; and though it started out very well, the stock has fallen very low. Between ourselves, it is not worth over three or four cents. When the officers of the company found out that no one would buy their stock, and that no one believed in them or their scheme, they laid a cable to Octavia, and extended it on to this island. Then they said they had run out of ready money, and would wait until they got more before laying their cable any farther. I do not think they ever will lay it any farther, but that is none of my business. My business is to answer cable messages from San Francisco, so that the people who visit the home office can see that at least a part of the cable is working. That sometimes impresses them, and they buy stock. There is another chap over in Octavia, who relays all my messages and all my replies to those messages that come to me through him from San Francisco. They never send a message unless they have brought some one to the office whom they want to impress, and who, they think, has money to invest in the Y. C. C. stock, and so we never go near the wire, except at three o'clock every afternoon. And then generally only to say 'How are you?' or 'It's raining,' or something like that. I've been say-

ing 'It's raining,' now for the last three months, but to-day I will say that the new consul has arrived. That will be a pleasant surprise for the chap in Octavia, for he must be tired hearing about the weather. He generally answers, 'Here too,' or 'So you said,' or something like that. I don't know what he says to the home office. He's brighter than I am, and that's why they put him between the two ends. He can see that the messages are transmitted more fully and more correctly, in a way to please possible subscribers."

"Sort of copy editor," suggested Albert.

"Yes, something of that sort, I fancy," said Stedman.

They walked down to the little shed on the shore, where the Y. C. C. office was placed, at three that day, and Albert watched Stedman send off his message with much interest. The "chap at Octavia," on being informed that the American consul had arrived at Opeki, inquired, somewhat disrespectfully, "Is it a life sentence?"

"What does he mean by that?" asked Albert.

"I suppose," said his secretary, doubtfully, "that he thinks it a sort of a punishment to be sent to Opeki. I hope you won't grow to think so."

"Opeki is all very well," said Gordon, "or it will be when we get things going our way."

As they walked back to the office, Albert noticed a brass cannon, perched on a rock at the entrance to the harbor. This had been put there by the last consul, but it had not been fired for many years. Albert immediately ordered the two Bradleys to get it in order, and to rig up a flag-pole beside it, for one of his American flags, which they were to salute every night when they lowered it at sundown.

"And when we are not using it," he said, "the King can borrow it to celebrate with, if he doesn't impose on us too often. The royal salute ought to be twenty-one guns, I think; but that would use up too much powder, so he will have to content himself with two."

"Did you notice," asked Stedman, that night, as they sat on the veranda of the consul's house, in the moonlight, "how the people bowed to us as we passed?"

"Yes," Albert said he had noticed it. "Why?"

"Well, they never saluted me," replied Stedman. "That sign of respect is due to the show we made at the reception."

"It is due to us, in any event," said the consul, severely. "I tell you, my secretary, that we, as the representatives of the United States Government, must be properly honored

on this island. We must become a power. And we must do so without getting into trouble with the King. We must make them honor him, too, and then as we push him up, we will push ourselves up at the same time."

"They don't think much of consuls in Opeki," said Stedman, doubtfully. "You see the last one was a pretty poor sort. He brought the office into disrepute, and it wasn't really until I came and told them what a fine country the United States was, that they had any opinion of it at all. Now we must change all that."

"That is just what we will do," said Albert. "We will transform Opeki into a powerful and beautiful city. We will make these people work. They must put up a palace for the King, and lay out streets, and build wharves, and drain the town properly, and light it. I haven't seen this patent lighting apparatus of yours, but you had better get to work at it at once, and I'll persuade the King to appoint you commissioner of highways and gas, with authority to make his people toil. And I," he cried, in free enthusiasm, "will organize a navy and a standing army. Only," he added, with a relapse of interest, "there isn't anybody to fight."

"There isn't?" said Stedman, grimly, with a scornful smile. "You just go hunt up old Messenwah and the Hillmen with your standing

army once and you'll get all the fighting you want."

"The Hillmen?" said Albert.

"The Hillmen are the natives that live up there in the hills," Stedman said, nodding his head toward the three high mountains at the other end of the island, that stood out blackly against the purple, moonlit sky. "There are nearly as many of them as there are Opekians, and they hunt and fight for a living and for the pleasure of it. They have an old rascal named Messenwah for a king, and they come down here about once every three months, and tear things up."

Albert sprang to his feet.

"Oh, they do, do they?" he said, staring up at the mountain-tops. "They come down here and tear up things, do they? Well, I think we'll stop that, I think we'll stop that! I don't care how many there are. I'll get the two Bradleys to tell me all they know about drilling, to-morrow morning, and we'll drill these Opekians, and have sham battles, and attacks, and repulses, until I make a lot of wild, howling Zulus out of them. And when the Hillmen come down to pay their quarterly visit, they'll go back again on a run. At least some of them will," he added, ferociously. "Some of them will stay right here."

"Dear me, dear me!" said Stedman, with awe; "you are a born fighter, aren't you?"

"Well, you wait and see," said Gordon; "maybe I am. I haven't studied tactics of war and the history of battles, so that I might be a great war correspondent, without learning something. And there is only one king on this island, and that is old Ollypybus himself. And I'll go over and have a talk with him about it to-morrow."

Young Stedman walked up and down the length of the veranda, in and out of the moonlight, with his hands in his pockets, and his head on his chest. "You have me all stirred up, Gordon," he said; "you seem so confident and bold, and you're not so much older than I am, either."

"My training has been different; that's all," said the reporter.

"Yes," Stedman said, bitterly. "I have been sitting in an office ever since I left school, sending news over a wire or a cable, and you have been out in the world, gathering it."

"And now," said Gordon, smiling, and putting his arm around the other boy's shoulders, "we are going to make news ourselves."

"There is one thing I want to say to you before you turn in," said Stedman. "Before you suggest all these improvements on Ollypybus, you

must remember that he has ruled absolutely here for twenty years, and that he does not think much of consuls. He has only seen your predecessor and yourself. He likes you because you appeared with such dignity, and because of the presents; but if I were you, I wouldn't suggest these improvements as coming from yourself."

"I don't understand," said Gordon; "who could they come from?"

"Well," said Stedman, "if you will allow me to advise—and you see I know these people pretty well—I would have all these suggestions come from the President direct."

"The President!" exclaimed Gordon; "but how? What does the President know or care about Opeki? and it would take so long—oh, I see, the cable. Is that what you have been doing?" he asked.

"Well, only once," said Stedman, guiltily; "that was when he wanted to turn me out of the consul's office, and I had a cable that very afternoon, from the President, ordering me to stay where I was. Ollypybus doesn't understand the cable, of course, but he knows that it sends messages; and sometimes I pretend to send messages for him to the President; but he began asking me to tell the President to come and pay him a visit, and I had to stop it."

"I'm glad you told me," said Gordon. "The President shall begin to cable to-morrow. He will need an extra appropriation from Congress to pay for his private cablegrams alone."

"And there's another thing," said Stedman. "In all your plans, you've arranged for the people's improvement, but not for their amusement; and they are a peaceful, jolly, simple sort of people, and we must please them."

"Have they no games or amusements of their own?" asked Gordon.

"Well, not what we would call games."

"Very well, then, I'll teach them base-ball. Foot-ball would be too warm. But that plaza in front of the King's bungalow, where his palace is going to be, is just the place for a diamond. On the whole, though," added the consul, after a moment's reflection, "you'd better attend to that yourself. I don't think it becomes my dignity as American consul to take off my coat and give lessons to young Opekians in sliding to bases; do you? No; I think you'd better do that. The Bradleys will help you, and you had better begin to-morrow. You have been wanting to know what a secretary of legation's duties are, and now you know. It's to organize base-ball nines. And after you get yours ready," he added, as he turned into his room for the night, "I'll train one that will

sweep yours off the face of the island. For *this* American consul can pitch three curves."

The best laid plans of men go far astray, sometimes, and the great and beautiful city that was to rise on the coast of Opeki was not built in a day. Nor was it ever built. For before the Bradleys could mark out the foul-lines for the base-ball field on the plaza, or teach their standing army the goose step, or lay bamboo pipes for the water-mains, or clear away the cactus for the extension of the King's palace, the Hill-men paid Opeki their quarterly visit.

Albert had called on the King the next morning, with Stedman as his interpreter, as he had said he would, and, with maps and sketches, had shown his Majesty what he proposed to do toward improving Opeki and ennobling her king, and when the King saw Albert's free-hand sketches of wharves with tall ships lying at anchor, and rows of Opekian warriors with the Bradleys at their head, and the design for his new palace, and a royal sedan chair, he believed that these things were already his, and not still only on paper, and he appointed Albert his Minister of War, Stedman his Minister of Home Affairs, and selected two of his wisest and oldest subjects to serve them as joint advisers. His enthusiasm was even greater than Gordon's, because he did not appreciate the

difficulties. He thought Gordon a semi-god, a worker of miracles, and urged the putting up of a monument to him at once in the public plaza, to which Albert objected, on the ground that it would be too suggestive of an idol; and to which Stedman also objected, but for the less unselfish reason that it would "be in the way of the pitcher's box."

They were feverishly discussing all these great changes, and Stedman was translating as rapidly as he could translate, the speeches of four different men—for the two counsellors had been called in—all of whom wanted to speak at once when there came from outside a great shout, and the screams of women, and the clashing of iron, and the pattering footsteps of men running.

As they looked at one another in startled surprise, a native ran into the room, followed by Bradley, Jr., and threw himself down before the King. While he talked, beating his hands and bowing before Ollypybus, Bradley, Jr., pulled his forelock to the consul, and told how this man lived on the far outskirts of the village; how he had been captured while out hunting, by a number of the Hillmen; and how he had escaped to tell the people that their old enemies were on the war-path again, and rapidly approaching the village.

Outside, the women were gathering in the

plaza, with the children about them, and the men were running from hut to hut, warning their fellows, and arming themselves with spears and swords, and the native bows and arrows.

"They might have waited until we had that army trained," said Gordon, in a tone of the keenest displeasure. "Tell me, quick, what do they generally do when they come?"

"Steal all the cattle and goats, and a woman or two, and set fire to the huts in the outskirts," replied Stedman.

"Well, we must stop them," said Gordon, jumping up. "We must take out a flag of truce and treat with them. They must be kept off until I have my army in working order. It is most inconvenient. If they had only waited two months, now, or six weeks even, we could have done something; but now we must make peace. Tell the King we are going out to fix things with them, and tell him to keep off his warriors until he learns whether we succeed or fail."

"But, Gordon!" gasped Stedman. "Albert! You don't understand. Why, man, this isn't a street-fight or a cane-rush. They'll stick you full of spears, dance on your body, and eat you, maybe. A flag of truce!—you're talking nonsense. What do they know of a flag of truce?"

"You're talking nonsense, too," said Albert,

"and you're talking to your superior officer. If you are not with me in this, go back to your cable, and tell the man in Octavia that it's a warm day, and that the sun is shining; but if you've any spirit in you—and I think you have—run to the office and get my Winchester rifles, and the two shot-guns, and my revolvers, and my uniform, and a lot of brass things for presents, and run all the way there and back. And make time. Play you're riding a bicycle at the Agricultural Fair."

Stedman did not hear this last, for he was already off and away, pushing through the crowd, and calling on Bradley, Sr., to follow him. Bradley, Jr., looked at Gordon with eyes that snapped, like a dog that is waiting for his master to throw a stone.

"I can fire a Winchester, sir," he said. "Old Tom can't. He's no good at long range 'cept with a big gun, sir. Don't give him the Winchester. Give it to me, please, sir."

Albert met Stedman in the plaza, and pulled off his blazer, and put on Captain Travis's—now his—uniform coat, and his white pith helmet.

"Now, Jack," he said, "get up there and tell these people that we are going out to make peace with these Hillmen, or bring them back prisoners of war. Tell them we are the pre-

servers of their homes and wives and children; and you, Bradley, take these presents, and young Bradley, keep close to me, and carry this rifle."

Stedman's speech was hot and wild enough to suit a critical and feverish audience before a barricade in Paris. And when he was through, Gordon and Bradley punctuated his oration by firing off the two Winchester rifles in the air, at which the people jumped and fell on their knees, and prayed to their several gods. The fighting men of the village followed the four white men to the outskirts, and took up their stand there as Stedman told them to do, and the four walked on over the roughly hewn road, to meet the enemy.

Gordon walked with Bradley, Jr., in advance. Stedman and old Tom Bradley followed close behind with the two shot-guns, and the presents in a basket.

"Are these Hillmen used to guns?" asked Gordon. Stedman said no, they were not.

"This shot-gun of mine is the only one on the island," he explained, "and we never came near enough them before to do anything with it. It only carries a hundred yards. The Opekians never make any show of resistance. They are quite content if the Hillmen satisfy themselves with the outlying huts, as long as

they leave them and the town alone; so they seldom come to close quarters."

The four men walked on for half an hour or so in silence, peering eagerly on every side; but it was not until they had left the woods and marched out into the level stretch of grassy country that they came upon the enemy. The Hillmen were about forty in number, and were as savage and ugly-looking giants as any in a picture-book. They had captured a dozen cows and goats, and were driving them on before them, as they advanced farther upon the village. When they saw the four men, they gave a mixed chorus of cries and yells, and some of them stopped, and others ran forward, shaking their spears, and shooting their broad arrows into the ground before them. A tall, gray-bearded, muscular old man, with a skirt of feathers about him, and necklaces of bones and animals' claws around his bare chest, ran in front of them, and seemed to be trying to make them approach more slowly.

"Is that Messenwah?" asked Gordon.

"Yes," said Stedman; "he is trying to keep them back. I don't believe he ever saw a white man before."

"Stedman," said Albert, speaking quickly, "give your gun to Bradley, and go forward with your arms in the air, and waving your

handkerchief, and tell them in their language that the King is coming. If they go at you, Bradley and I will kill a goat or two, to show them what we can do with the rifles; and if that don't stop them, we will shoot at their legs; and if that don't stop them—I guess you'd better come back, and we'll all run."

Stedman looked at Albert, and Albert looked at Stedman, and neither of them winced or flinched.

"Is this another of my secretary's duties?" asked the younger boy.

"Yes," said the consul; "but a resignation is always in order. You needn't go if you don't like it. You see, you know the language and I don't, but I know how to shoot, and you don't."

"That's perfectly satisfactory," said Stedman, handing his gun to old Bradley. "I only wanted to know why I was to be sacrificed instead of one of the Bradleys. It's because I know the language. Bradley, Sr., you see the evil results of a higher education. Wish me luck, please," he said, "and for goodness' sake," he added impressively, "don't waste much time shooting goats."

The Hillmen had stopped about two hundred yards off, and were drawn up in two lines, shouting, and dancing, and hurling taunting remarks at their few adversaries. The stolen

cattle were bunched together back of the King. As Stedman walked steadily forward with his handkerchief fluttering, and howling out something in their own tongue, they stopped and listened. As he advanced, his three companions followed him at about fifty yards in the rear. He was one hundred and fifty yards from the Hillmen before they made out what he said, and then one of the young braves, resenting it as an insult to his chief, shot an arrow at him. Stedman dodged the arrow and stood his ground without even taking a step backward, only turning slightly to put his hands to his mouth, and to shout something which sounded to his companions like, "About time to begin on the goats." But the instant the young man had fired, King Messenwah swung his club and knocked him down, and none of the others moved. Then Messenwah advanced before his men to meet Stedman, and on Stedman's opening and shutting his hands to show that he was unarmed, the King threw down his club and spears, and came forward as empty-handed as himself.

"Ah," gasped Bradley, Jr., with his finger trembling on his lever, "let me take a shot at him now." Gordon struck the man's gun up, and walked forward in all the glory of his gold and blue uniform; for both he and Stedman

saw now that Messenwah was more impressed by their appearance, and in the fact that they were white men, than with any threats of immediate war. So when he saluted Gordon haughtily, that young man gave him a haughty nod in return, and bade Stedman tell the King that he would permit him to sit down. The King did not quite appear to like this, but he sat down, nevertheless, and nodded his head gravely.

"Now tell him," said Gordon, "that I come from the ruler of the greatest nation on earth, and that I recognize Ollypybus as the only King of this island, and that I come to this little three-penny King with either peace and presents, or bullets and war."

"Have I got to tell him he's a little three-penny King?" said Stedman, plaintively.

"No; you needn't give a literal translation; it can be as free as you please."

"Thanks," said the secretary, humbly.

"And tell him," continued Gordon, "that we will give presents to him and his warriors if he keeps away from Ollypybus, and agrees to keep away always. If he won't do that, try to get him to agree to stay away for three months at least, and by that time we can get word to San Francisco, and have a dozen muskets over here in two months; and when our time of probation is up, and he and his merry men come

dancing down the hillside, we will blow them up as high as his mountains. But you needn't tell him that, either. And if he is proud and haughty, and would rather fight, ask him to restrain himself until we show what we can do with our weapons at two hundred yards."

Stedman seated himself in the long grass in front of the King, and with many revolving gestures of his arms, and much pointing to Gordon, and profound nods and bows, retold what Gordon had dictated. When he had finished, the King looked at the bundle of presents, and at the guns, of which Stedman had given a very wonderful account, but answered nothing.

"I guess," said Stedman, with a sigh, "that we will have to give him a little practical demonstration to help matters. I am sorry, but I think one of those goats has got to die. It's like vivisection. The lower order of animals have to suffer for the good of the higher."

"Oh," said Bradley, Jr., cheerfully, "I'd just as soon shoot one of those niggers as one of the goats."

So Stedman bade the King tell his men to drive a goat toward them, and the King did so, and one of the men struck one of the goats with his spear, and it ran clumsily across the plain.

"Take your time, Bradley," said Gordon.

"Aim low, and if you hit it, you can have it for supper."

"And if you miss it," said Stedman, gloomily, "Messenwah may have us for supper."

The Hillmen had seated themselves a hundred yards off, while the leaders were debating, and they now rose curiously and watched Bradley, as he sank upon one knee, and covered the goat with his rifle. When it was about one hundred and fifty yards off he fired, and the goat fell over dead.

And then all the Hillmen, with the King himself, broke away on a run, toward the dead animal, with much shouting. The King came back alone, leaving his people standing about and examining the goat. He was much excited, and talked and gesticulated violently.

"He says—" said Stedman; "he says——"

"What? yes, go on."

"He says—goodness me!—what do you think he says?"

"Well, what does he say?" cried Gordon, in great excitement. "Don't keep it all to yourself."

"He says," said Stedman, "that we are deceived; that he is no longer King of the Island of Opeki; that he is in great fear of us, and that he has got himself into no end of trouble. He says he sees that we are indeed mighty

men, that to us he is as helpless as the wild boar before the javelin of the hunter."

"Well, he's right," said Gordon. "Go on."

"But that which we ask is no longer his to give. He has sold his kingship and his right to this island to another king, who came to him two days ago in a great canoe, and who made noises as we do—with guns, I suppose he means—and to whom he sold the island for a watch that he has in a bag around his neck. And that he signed a paper, and made marks on a piece of bark, to show that he gave up the island freely and forever."

"What does he mean?" said Gordon. "How can he give up the island? Ollypybus is the king of half of it, anyway, and he knows it."

"That's just it," said Stedman. "That's what frightens him. He said he didn't care about Ollypybus, and didn't count him in when he made the treaty, because he is such a peaceful chap that he knew he could thrash him into doing anything he wanted him to do. And now that you have turned up and taken Ollypybus's part, he wishes he hadn't sold the island, and wishes to know if you are angry."

"Angry? of course I'm angry," said Gordon, glaring as grimly at the frightened monarch as he thought was safe. "Who wouldn't be angry? Who do you think these people were who made

a fool of him, Stedman? Ask him to let us see this watch."

Stedman did so, and the King fumbled among his necklaces until he had brought out a leather bag tied round his neck with a cord, and containing a plain stem-winding silver watch marked on the inside "Munich."

"That doesn't tell anything," said Gordon. "But it's plain enough. Some foreign ship of war has settled on this place as a coaling-station, or has annexed it for colonization, and they've sent a boat ashore, and they've made a treaty with this old chap, and forced him to sell his birthright for a mess of porridge. Now, that's just like those monarchical pirates, imposing upon a poor old black."

Old Bradley looked at him impudently.

"Not at all," said Gordon; "it's quite different with us; we don't want to rob him or Ollypybus, or to annex their land. All we want to do is to improve it, and have the fun of running it for them and meddling in their affairs of state. Well, Stedman," he said, "what shall we do?"

Stedman said that the best and only thing to do was to threaten to take the watch away from Messenwah, but to give him a revolver instead, which would make a friend of him for life, and to keep him supplied with cartridges only as

long as he behaved himself, and then to make him understand that, as Ollypybus had not given his consent to the loss of the island, Messenwah's agreement, or treaty, or whatever it was, did not stand, and that he had better come down the next day, early in the morning, and join in a general consultation. This was done, and Messenwah agreed willingly to their proposition, and was given his revolver and shown how to shoot it, while the other presents were distributed among the other men, who were as happy over them as girls with a full dance-card.

"And now, to-morrow," said Stedman, "understand, you are all to come down unarmed, and sign a treaty with great Ollypybus, in which he will agree to keep to one-half of the island if you keep to yours, and there must be no more wars or goat-stealing, or this gentleman on my right and I will come up and put holes in you just as the gentleman on the left did with the goat."

Messenwah and his warriors promised to come early, and saluted reverently as Gordon and his three companions walked up together very proudly and stiffly.

"Do you know how I feel?" said Gordon.

"How?" asked Stedman.

"I feel as I used to do in the city, when the

boys in the street were throwing snowballs, and I had to go by with a high hat on my head and pretend not to know they were behind me. I always felt a cold chill down my spinal column, and I could feel that snowball, whether it came or not, right in the small of my back. And I can feel one of those men pulling his bow now, and the arrow sticking out of my right shoulder."

"Oh, no, you can't," said Stedman. "They are too much afraid of those rifles. But I do feel sorry for any of those warriors whom old man Messenwah doesn't like, now that he has that revolver. He isn't the sort to practise on goats."

There was great rejoicing when Stedman and Gordon told their story to the King, and the people learned that they were not to have their huts burned and their cattle stolen. The armed Opekians formed a guard around the ambassadors and escorted them to their homes with cheers and shouts, and the women ran to their side and tried to kiss Gordon's hand.

"I'm sorry I can't speak the language, Stedman," said Gordon, "or I would tell them what a brave man you are. You are too modest to do it yourself, even if I dictated something for you to say. As for me," he said, pulling off his uniform, "I am thoroughly disgusted and disappointed. It never occurred to me until

it was all over that this was my chance to be a war correspondent. It wouldn't have been much of a war, but then I would have been the only one on the spot, and that counts for a great deal. Still, my time may come."

"We have a great deal on hand for to-morrow," said Gordon that evening, "and we had better turn in early."

And so the people were still singing and rejoicing down in the village when the two conspirators for the peace of the country went to sleep for the night. It seemed to Gordon as though he had hardly turned his pillow twice to get the coolest side when some one touched him, and he saw, by the light of the dozen glow-worms in the tumbler by his bedside, a tall figure at its foot.

"It's me—Bradley," said the figure.

"Yes," said Gordon, with the haste of a man to show that sleep has no hold on him; "exactly; what is it?"

"There is a ship of war in the harbor," Bradley answered in a whisper. "I heard her anchor chains rattle when she came to, and that woke me. I could hear that if I were dead. And then I made sure by her lights; she's a great boat, sir, and I can know she's a ship of war by the challenging when they change the watch. I thought you'd like to know, sir."

Gordon sat up and clutched his knees with his hands. "Yes, of course," he said; "you are quite right. Still, I don't see what there is to do."

He did not wish to show too much youthful interest, but though fresh from civilization, he had learned how far from it he was, and he was curious to see this sign of it that had come so much more quickly than he had anticipated.

"Wake Mr. Stedman, will you?" said he, "and we will go and take a look at her."

"You can see nothing but the lights," said Bradley, as he left the room; "it's a black night, sir."

Stedman was not new from the sight of men and ships of war, and came in half dressed and eager.

"Do you suppose it's the big canoe Messenwah spoke of?" he said.

"I thought of that," said Gordon.

The three men fumbled their way down the road to the plaza, and saw, as soon as they turned into it, the great outlines and the brilliant lights of an immense vessel, still more immense in the darkness, and glowing like a strange monster of the sea, with just a suggestion here and there, where the lights spread, of her cabins and bridges. As they stood on

the shore, shivering in the cool night-wind, they heard the bells strike over the water.

"It's two o'clock," said Bradley, counting.

"Well, we can do nothing, and they cannot mean to do much to-night," Albert said. "We had better get some more sleep, and, Bradley, you keep watch and tell us as soon as day breaks."

"Ay, ay, sir," said the sailor.

"If that's the man-of-war that made the treaty with Messenwah, and Messenwah turns up to-morrow, it looks as if our day would be pretty well filled up," said Albert, as they felt their way back to the darkness.

"What do you intend to do?" asked his secretary, with a voice of some concern.

"I don't know," Albert answered gravely, from the blackness of the night. "It looks as if we were getting ahead just a little too fast, doesn't it? Well," he added, as they reached the house, "let's try to keep in step with the procession, even if we can't be drum-majors and walk in front of it." And with this cheering tone of confidence in their ears, the two diplomats went soundly asleep again.

The light of the rising sun filled the room, and the parrots were chattering outside, when Bradley woke him again.

"They are sending a boat ashore, sir," he

said, excitedly, and filled with the importance of the occasion. "She's a German man-of-war, and one of the new model. A beautiful boat, sir; for her lines were laid in Glasgow, and I can tell that, no matter what flag she flies. You had best be moving to meet them: the village isn't awake yet."

Albert took a cold bath and dressed leisurely; then he made Bradley, Jr., who had slept through it all, get up breakfast, and the two young men ate it and drank their coffee comfortably and with an air of confidence that deceived their servants, if it did not deceive themselves. But when they came down the path, smoking and swinging their sticks, and turned into the plaza, their composure left them like a mask, and they stopped where they stood. The plaza was enclosed by the natives gathered in whispering groups, and depressed by fear and wonder. On one side were crowded all the Messenwah warriors, unarmed, and as silent and disturbed as the Opekians. In the middle of the plaza some twenty sailors were busy rearing and bracing a tall flag-staff that they had shaped from a royal palm, and they did this as unconcernedly and as contemptuously, and with as much indifference to the strange groups on either side of them, as though they were working on a barren coast, with nothing but

the startled sea-gulls about them. As Albert and Stedman came upon the scene, the flag-pole was in place, and the halyards hung from it with a little bundle of bunting at the end of one of them.

"We must find the King at once," said Gordon. He was terribly excited and angry. "It is easy enough to see what this means. They are going through the form of annexing this island to the other lands of the German Government. They are robbing old Ollypybus of what is his. They have not even given him a silver watch for it."

The King was in his bungalow, facing the plaza. Messenwah was with him, and an equal number of each of their councils. The common danger had made them lie down together in peace; but they gave a murmur of relief as Gordon strode into the room with no ceremony, and greeted them with a curt wave of the hand.

"Now then, Stedman, be quick," he said. "Explain to them what this means; tell them that I will protect them; that I am anxious to see that Ollypybus is not cheated; that we will do all we can for them."

Outside, on the shore, a second boat's crew had landed a group of officers and a file of marines. They walked in all the dignity of

full dress across the plaza to the flag-pole, and formed in line on the three sides of it, with the marines facing the sea. The officers, from the captain with a prayer-book in his hand, to the youngest middy, were as indifferent to the frightened natives about them as the other men had been. The natives, awed and afraid, crouched back among their huts, the marines and the sailors kept their eyes front, and the German captain opened his prayer-book. The debate in the bungalow was over.

"If you only had your uniform, sir," said Bradley, Sr., miserably.

"This is a little bit too serious for uniforms and bicycle medals," said Gordon. "And these men are used to gold lace."

He pushed his way through the natives, and stepped confidently across the plaza. The youngest middy saw him coming, and nudged the one next him with his elbow, and he nudged the next, but none of the officers moved, because the captain had begun to read.

"One minute, please," called Gordon.

He stepped out into the hollow square formed by the marines, and raised his helmet to the captain.

"Do you speak English or French?" Gordon said in French; "I do not understand German."

The captain lowered the book in his hands

and gazed reflectively at Gordon through his spectacles, and made no reply.

"If I understand this," said the younger man, trying to be very impressive and polite, "you are laying claim to this land, in behalf of the German Government."

The captain continued to observe him thoughtfully, and then said, "That iss so," and then asked, "Who are you?"

"I represent the King of this island, Ollypybus, whose people you see around you. I also represent the United States Government, that does not tolerate a foreign power near her coast, since the days of President Monroe and before. The treaty you have made with Messenwah is an absurdity. There is only one king with whom to treat, and he——"

The captain turned to one of his officers and said something, and then, after giving another curious glance at Gordon, raised his book and continued reading, in a deep, unruffled monotone. The officer whispered an order, and two of the marines stepped out of line, and dropping the muzzles of their muskets, pushed Gordon back out of the enclosure, and left him there with his lips white, and trembling all over with indignation. He would have liked to have rushed back into the lines and broken the captain's spectacles over his sun-tanned nose and

cheeks, but he was quite sure this would only result in his getting shot, or in his being made ridiculous before the natives, which was almost as bad; so he stood still for a moment, with his blood choking him, and then turned and walked back to where the King and Stedman were whispering together. Just as he turned, one of the men pulled the halyards, the ball of bunting ran up into the air, bobbed, twitched, and turned, and broke into the folds of the German flag. At the same moment the marines raised their muskets and fired a volley, and the officers saluted and the sailors cheered.

"Do you see that?" cried Stedman, catching Gordon's humor, to Ollypybus; "that means that you are no longer king, that strange people are coming here to take your land, and to turn your people into servants, and to drive you back into the mountains. Are you going to submit? are you going to let that flag stay where it is?"

Messenwah and Ollypybus gazed at one another with fearful, helpless eyes. "We are afraid," Ollypybus cried; "we do not know what we should do."

"What do they say?"

"They say they do not know what to do."

"I know what I'd do," cried Gordon. "If I were not an American consul, I'd pull down

their old flag, and put a hole in their boat and sink her."

"Well, I'd wait until they get under way before you do either of those things," said Stedman, soothingly. "That captain seems to be a man of much determination of character."

"But I will pull it down," cried Gordon. "I will resign, as Travis did. I am no longer consul. You can be consul if you want to. I promote you. I am going up a step higher. I mean to be king. Tell those two," he ran on, excitedly, "that their only course and only hope is in me; that they must make me ruler of the island until this thing is over; that I will resign again as soon as it is settled, but that some one must act at once, and if they are afraid to, I am not, only they must give me authority to act for them. They must abdicate in my favor."

"Are you in earnest?" gasped Stedman.

"Don't I talk as if I were?" demanded Gordon, wiping the perspiration from his forehead.

"And can I be consul?" said Stedman, cheerfully.

"Of course. Tell them what I propose to do."

Stedman turned and spoke rapidly to the two kings. The people gathered closer to hear.

The two rival monarchs looked at one another in silence for a moment, and then both began to speak at once, their counsellors interrupting them and mumbling their guttural comments with anxious earnestness. It did not take them very long to see that they were all of one mind, and then they both turned to Gordon and dropped on one knee, and placed his hands on their foreheads, and Stedman raised his cap.

"They agree," he explained, for it was but pantomime to Albert. "They salute you as a ruler; they are calling you Tellaman, which means peacemaker. The Peacemaker, that is your title. I hope you will deserve it, but I think they might have chosen a more appropriate one."

"Then I'm really King?" demanded Albert, decidedly, "and I can do what I please? They give me full power. Quick, do they?"

"Yes, but don't do it," begged Stedman, "and just remember I am American consul now, and that is a much superior being to a crowned monarch; you said so yourself."

Albert did not reply to this, but ran across the plaza, followed by the two Bradleys. The boats had gone.

"Hoist that flag beside the brass cannon," he cried, "and stand ready to salute it when I drop this one."

Bradley, Jr., grasped the halyards of the flag, which he had forgotten to raise and salute in the morning in all the excitement of the arrival of the man-of-war. Bradley, Sr., stood by the brass cannon, blowing gently on his lighted fuse. The Peacemaker took the halyards of the German flag in his two hands, gave a quick, sharp tug, and down came the red, white, and black piece of bunting, and the next moment young Bradley sent the Stars and Stripes up in its place. As it rose, Bradley's brass cannon barked merrily like a little bull-dog, and the Peacemaker cheered.

"Why don't you cheer, Stedman?" he shouted. "Tell those people to cheer for all they are worth. What sort of an American consul are you?"

Stedman raised his arm half-heartedly to give the time, and opened his mouth; but his arm remained fixed and his mouth open, while his eyes stared at the retreating boat of the German man-of-war. In the stern sheets of this boat the stout German captain was struggling unsteadily to his feet; he raised his arm and waved it to some one on the great man-of-war, as though giving an order. The natives looked from Stedman to the boat, and even Gordon stopped in his cheering, and stood motionless, watching. They had not very long to

wait. There was a puff of white smoke, and a flash, and then a loud report, and across the water came a great black ball skipping lightly through and over the waves, as easily as a flat stone thrown by a boy. It seemed to come very slowly. At least it came slowly enough for every one to see that it was coming directly toward the brass cannon. The Bradleys certainly saw this, for they ran as fast as they could, and kept on running. The ball caught the cannon under its mouth and tossed it in the air, knocking the flag-pole into a dozen pieces, and passing on through two of the palm-covered huts.

"Great Heavens, Gordon!" cried Stedman; "they are firing on us."

But Gordon's face was radiant and wild.

"Firing on *us!*" he cried. "On us! Don't you see? Don't you understand? What do *we* amount to? They have fired on the American flag! Don't you see what that means? It means war. A great international war. And I am a war correspondent at last!" He ran up to Stedman and seized him by the arm so tightly that it hurt.

"By three o'clock," he said, "they will know in the office what has happened. The country will know it to-morrow when the paper is on the street; people will read it all over the world.

The Emperor will hear of it at breakfast; the President will cable for further particulars. He will get them. It is the chance of a lifetime, and we are on the spot!"

Stedman did not hear this; he was watching the broadside of the ship to see another puff of white smoke, but there came no such sign. The two row-boats were raised, there was a cloud of black smoke from the funnel, a creaking of chains sounding faintly across the water, and the ship started at half-speed and moved out of the harbor. The Opekians and the Hillmen fell on their knees, or to dancing, as best suited their sense of relief, but Gordon shook his head.

"They are only going to land the marines," he said; "perhaps they are going to the spot they stopped at before, or to take up another position farther out at sea. They will land men and then shell the town, and the land forces will march here and co-operate with the vessel, and everybody will be taken prisoner or killed. We have the centre of the stage, and we are making history."

"I'd rather read it than make it," said Stedman. "You've got us in a senseless, silly position, Gordon, and a mighty unpleasant one. And for no reason that I can see, except to make copy for your paper."

"Tell those people to get their things to-

gether," said Gordon, "and march back out of danger into the woods. Tell Ollypybus I am going to fix things all right; I don't know just how yet, but I will, and now come after me as quickly as you can to the cable office. I've got to tell the paper all about it."

It was three o'clock before the "chap at Octavia" answered Stedman's signalling. Then Stedman delivered Gordon's message, and immediately shut off all connection, before the Octavia operator could question him. Gordon dictated his message in this way:—

"Begin with the date line, 'Opeki, June 22.'

"At seven o'clock this morning, the captain and officers of the German man-of-war *Kaiser* went through the ceremony of annexing this island in the name of the German Emperor, basing their right to do so on an agreement made with a leader of a wandering tribe known as the Hillmen. King Ollypybus, the present monarch of Opeki, delegated his authority, as also did the leader of the Hillmen, to King Tellaman, or the Peacemaker, who tore down the German flag, and raised that of the United States in its place. At the same moment the flag was saluted by the battery. This salute, being mistaken for an attack on the *Kaiser*, was answered by that vessel. Her first shot took immediate effect, completely destroying the

entire battery of the Opekians, cutting down the American flag, and destroying the houses of the people——"

"There was only one brass cannon and two huts," expostulated Stedman.

"Well, that was the whole battery, wasn't it?" asked Gordon, "and two huts is plural. I said houses of the people. I couldn't say two houses of the people. Just you send this as you get it. You are not an American consul at the present moment. You are an under-paid agent of a cable company, and you send my stuff as I write it. The American residents have taken refuge in the consulate—that's us," explained Gordon, "and the English residents have sought refuge in the woods—that's the Bradleys. King Tellaman—that's me—declares his intention of fighting against the annexation. The forces of the Opekians are under the command of Captain Thomas Bradley—I guess I might as well make him a colonel—of Colonel Thomas Bradley, of the English army.

"The American consul says— Now, what do you say, Stedman? Hurry up, please," asked Gordon, "and say something good and strong."

"You get me all mixed up," complained Stedman, plaintively. "Which am I now, a cable operator or the American consul?"

"Consul, of course. Say something patriotic

and about your determination to protect the interests of your government, and all that." Gordon bit the end of his pencil impatiently, and waited.

"I won't do anything of the sort, Gordon," said Stedman; "you are getting me into an awful lot of trouble, and yourself too. I won't say a word."

"The American consul," read Gordon, as his pencil wriggled across the paper, "refuses to say anything for publication until he has communicated with the authorities at Washington, but from all I can learn he sympathizes entirely with Tellaman. Your correspondent has just returned from an audience with King Tellaman, who asks him to inform the American people that the Monroe doctrine will be sustained as long as he rules this island. I guess that's enough to begin with," said Gordon. "Now send that off quick, and then get away from the instrument before the man in Octavia begins to ask questions. I am going out to precipitate matters."

Gordon found the two kings sitting dejectedly side by side, and gazing grimly upon the disorder of the village, from which the people were taking their leave as quickly as they could get their few belongings piled upon the ox-carts. Gordon walked among them, helping them in

every way he could, and tasting, in their subservience and gratitude, the sweets of sovereignty. When Stedman had locked up the cable office and rejoined him, he bade him tell Messenwah to send three of his youngest men and fastest runners back to the hills to watch for the German vessel and see where she was attempting to land her marines.

"This is a tremendous chance for descriptive writing, Stedman," said Gordon, enthusiastically; "all this confusion and excitement, and the people leaving their homes, and all that. It's like the people getting out of Brussels before Waterloo, and then the scene at the foot of the mountains, while they are camping out there, until the Germans leave. I never had a chance like this before."

It was quite dark by six o'clock, and none of the three messengers had as yet returned. Gordon walked up and down the empty plaza and looked now at the horizon for the man-of-war, and again down the road back of the village. But neither the vessel nor the messengers bearing word of her appeared. The night passed without any incident, and in the morning Gordon's impatience became so great that he walked out to where the villagers were in camp and passed on half way up the mountain, but he could see no sign of the man-of-war. He

came back more restless than before, and keenly disappointed.

"If something don't happen before three o'clock, Stedman," he said, "our second cablegram will have to consist of glittering generalities and a lengthy interview with King Tellaman, by himself."

Nothing did happen. Ollypybus and Messenwah began to breathe more freely. They believed the new king had succeeded in frightening the German vessel away forever. But the new king upset their hopes by telling them that the Germans had undoubtedly already landed, and had probably killed the three messengers.

"Now then," he said, with pleased expectation, as Stedman and he seated themselves in the cable office at three o'clock, "open it up and let's find out what sort of an impression we have made."

Stedman's face, as the answer came in to his first message of greeting, was one of strangely marked disapproval.

"What does he say?" demanded Gordon, anxiously.

"He hasn't done anything but swear yet," answered Stedman, grimly.

"What is he swearing about?"

"He wants to know why I left the cable yesterday. He says he has been trying to call

me up for the last twenty-four hours, ever since I sent my message at three o'clock. The home office is jumping mad, and want me discharged. They won't do that, though," he said, in a cheerful aside, "because they haven't paid me my salary for the last eight months. He says—great Scott! this will please you, Gordon—he says that there have been over two hundred queries for matter from papers all over the United States, and from Europe. Your paper beat them on the news, and now the home office is packed with San Francisco reporters, and the telegrams are coming in every minute, and they have been abusing him for not answering them, and he says that I'm a fool. He wants as much as you can send, and all the details. He says all the papers will have to put 'By Yokohama Cable Company' on the top of each message they print, and that that is advertising the company, and is sending the stock up. It rose fifteen points on 'change in San Francisco to-day, and the president and the other officers are buying——"

"Oh, I don't want to hear about their old company," snapped out Gordon, pacing up and down in despair. "What am I to do? that's what I want to know. Here I have the whole country stirred up and begging for news. On their knees for it, and a cable all to myself.

and the only man on the spot, and nothing to say. I'd just like to know how long that German idiot intends to wait before he begins shelling this town and killing people. He has put me in a most absurd position."

"Here's a message for you, Gordon," said Stedman, with business-like calm. "Albert Gordon, correspondent," he read. "Try American consul. First message O. K.; beat the country; can take all you send. Give names of foreign residents massacred, and fuller account blowing up palace. Dodge."

The expression on Gordon's face as this message was slowly read off to him, had changed from one of gratified pride to one of puzzled consternation.

"What's he mean by foreign residents massacred, and blowing up of palace?" asked Stedman, looking over his shoulder anxiously. "Who is Dodge?"

"Dodge is the night editor," said Gordon, nervously. "They must have read my message wrong. You sent just what I gave you, didn't you?" he asked.

"Of course I did," said Stedman, indignantly.

"I didn't say anything about the massacre of anybody, did I?" asked Gordon. "I hope they are not improving on my account. What

am I to do? This is getting awful. I'll have to go out and kill a few people myself. Oh, why don't that Dutch captain begin to do something! What sort of a fighter does he call himself? He wouldn't shoot at a school of porpoises. He's not——"

"Here comes a message to Leonard T. Travis, American consul, Opeki," read Stedman. "It's raining messages to-day. 'Send full details of massacre of American citizens by German sailors.' Secretary of—great Scott!" gasped Stedman, interrupting himself and gazing at his instrument with horrified fascination—"the Secretary of State."

"That settles it," roared Gordon, pulling at his hair and burying his face in his hands. "I have *got* to kill some of them now."

"Albert Gordon, correspondent," read Stedman, impressively, like the voice of Fate. "Is Colonel Thomas Bradley, commanding native forces at Opeki, Colonel Sir Thomas Kent-Bradley of Crimean war fame? Correspondent London *Times*, San Francisco Press Club."

"Go on, go on!" said Gordon, desperately. "I'm getting used to it now. Go on!"

"American consul, Opeki," read Stedman. "Home Secretary desires you to furnish list of names English residents killed during shelling of Opeki by ship of war *Kaiser*, and estimate of

amount property destroyed. Stoughton, British Embassy, Washington."

"Stedman!" cried Gordon, jumping to his feet, "there's a mistake here somewhere. These people cannot all have made my message read like that. Some one has altered it, and now I have got to make these people here live up to that message, whether they like being massacred and blown up or not. Don't answer any of those messages except the one from Dodge; tell him things have quieted down a bit, and that I'll send four thousand words on the flight of the natives from the village, and their encampment at the foot of the mountains, and of the exploring party we have sent out to look for the German vessel; and now I am going out to make something happen."

Gordon said that he would be gone for two hours at least, and as Stedman did not feel capable of receiving any more nerve-stirring messages, he cut off all connection with Octavia by saying, "Good-by for two hours," and running away from the office. He sat down on a rock on the beach, and mopped his face with his handkerchief.

"After a man has taken nothing more exciting than weather reports from Octavia for a year," he soliloquized, "it's a bit disturbing to have all the crowned heads of Europe and their

secretaries calling upon you for details of a massacre that never came off."

At the end of two hours Gordon returned from the consulate with a mass of manuscript in his hand.

"Here's three thousand words," he said, desperately. "I never wrote more and said less in my life. It will make them weep at the office. I had to pretend that they knew all that had happened so far; they apparently do know more than we do, and I have filled it full of prophecies of more trouble ahead, and with interviews with myself and the two ex-Kings. The only news element in it is, that the messengers have returned to report that the German vessel is not in sight, and that there is no news. They think she has gone for good. Suppose she has, Stedman," he groaned, looking at him helplessly, "what *am* I going to do?"

"Well, as for me," said Stedman, "I'm afraid to go near that cable. It's like playing with a live wire. My nervous system won't stand many more such shocks as those they gave us this afternoon."

Gordon threw himself down dejectedly in a chair in the office, and Stedman approached his instrument gingerly, as though it might explode.

"He's swearing again," he explained, sadly,

in answer to Gordon's look of inquiry. "He wants to know when I am going to stop running away from the wire. He has a stack of messages to send, he says, but I guess he'd better wait and take your copy first; don't you think so?"

"Yes, I do," said Gordon. "I don't want any more messages than I've had. That's the best I can do," he said, as he threw his manuscript down beside Stedman. "And they can keep on cabling until the wire burns red hot, and they won't get any more."

There was silence in the office for some time, while Stedman looked over Gordon's copy, and Gordon stared dejectedly out at the ocean.

"This is pretty poor stuff, Gordon," said Stedman. "It's like giving people milk when they want brandy."

"Don't you suppose I know that?" growled Gordon. "It's the best I can do, isn't it? It's not my fault that we are not all dead now. I can't massacre foreign residents if there are no foreign residents, but I can commit suicide, though, and I'll do it if something don't happen."

There was a long pause, in which the silence of the office was only broken by the sound of the waves beating on the coral reefs outside. Stedman raised his head wearily.

"He's swearing again," he said; "he says this stuff of yours is all nonsense. He says stock in

the Y. C. C. has gone up to one hundred and two, and that owners are unloading and making their fortunes, and that this sort of descriptive writing is not what the company want."

"What's he think I'm here for?" cried Gordon. "Does he think I pulled down the German flag and risked my neck half a dozen times and had myself made King just to boom his Yokohama cable stock? Confound him! You might at least swear back. Tell him just what the situation is in a few words. Here, stop that rigmarole to the paper, and explain to your home office that we are awaiting developments, and that, in the meanwhile, they must put up with the best we can send them. Wait; send this to Octavia."

Gordon wrote rapidly, and read what he wrote as rapidly as it was written.

"Operator, Octavia. You seem to have misunderstood my first message. The facts in the case are these. A German man-of-war raised a flag on this island. It was pulled down and the American flag raised in its place and saluted by a brass cannon. The German man-of-war fired once at the flag and knocked it down, and then steamed away and has not been seen since. Two huts were upset, that is all the damage done; the battery consisted of the one brass cannon before mentioned. No one, either na-

tive or foreign, has been massacred. The English residents are two sailors. The American residents are the young man who is sending you this cable and myself. Our first message was quite true in substance, but perhaps misleading in detail. I made it so because I fully expected much more to happen immediately. Nothing has happened, or seems likely to happen, and that is the exact situation up to date. Albert Gordon."

"Now," he asked, after a pause, "what does he say to that?"

"He doesn't say anything," said Stedman.

"I guess he has fainted. Here it comes," he added in the same breath. He bent toward his instrument, and Gordon raised himself from his chair and stood beside him as he read it off. The two young men hardly breathed in the intensity of their interest.

"Dear Stedman," he slowly read aloud. "You and your young friend are a couple of fools. If you had allowed me to send you the messages awaiting transmission here to you, you would not have sent me such a confession of guilt as you have just done. You had better leave Opeki at once or hide in the hills. I am afraid I have placed you in a somewhat compromising position with the company, which is unfortunate, especially as, if I am not mis-

taken, they owe you some back pay. You should have been wiser in your day, and bought Y. C. C. stock when it was down to five cents, as 'yours truly' did. You are not, Stedman, as bright a boy as some. And as for your friend, the war correspondent, he has queered himself for life. You see, my dear Stedman, after I had sent off your first message, and demands for further details came pouring in, and I could not get you at the wire to supply them, I took the liberty of sending some on myself."

"Great Heavens!" gasped Gordon.

Stedman grew very white under his tan, and the perspiration rolled on his cheeks.

"Your message was so general in its nature, that it allowed my imagination full play, and I sent on what I thought would please the papers, and, what was much more important to me, would advertise the Y. C. C. stock. This I have been doing while waiting for material from you. Not having a clear idea of the dimensions or population of Opeki, it is possible that I have done you and your newspaper friend some injustice. I killed off about a hundred American residents, two hundred English, because I do not like the English, and a hundred French. I blew up old Ollypybus and his palace with dynamite, and shelled the city,

destroying some hundred thousand dollars' worth of property, and then I waited anxiously for your friend to substantiate what I had said. This he has most unkindly failed to do. I am very sorry, but much more so for him than for myself, for I, my dear friend, have cabled on to a man in San Francisco, who is one of the directors of the Y. C. C., to sell all my stock, which he has done at one hundred and two, and he is keeping the money until I come. And I leave Octavia this afternoon to reap my just reward. I am in about twenty thousand dollars on your little war, and I feel grateful. So much so that I will inform you that the ship of war *Kaiser* has arrived at San Francisco, for which port she sailed directly from Opeki. Her captain has explained the real situation, and offered to make every amend for the accidental indignity shown to our flag. He says he aimed at the cannon, which was trained on his vessel, and which had first fired on him. But you must know, my dear Stedman, that before his arrival, war-vessels belonging to the several powers mentioned in my revised despatches, had started for Opeki at full speed, to revenge the butchery of the foreign residents. A word, my dear young friend, to the wise is sufficient. I am indebted to you to the extent of twenty thousand dollars, and in return I

give you this kindly advice. Leave Opeki. If there is no other way, swim. But leave Opeki."

The sun, that night, as it sank below the line where the clouds seemed to touch the sea, merged them both into a blazing, blood-red curtain, and colored the most wonderful spectacle that the natives of Opeki had ever seen. Six great ships of war, stretching out over a league of sea, stood blackly out against the red background, rolling and rising, and leaping forward, flinging back smoke and burning sparks up into the air behind them, and throbbing and panting like living creatures in their race for revenge. From the south came a three-decked vessel, a great island of floating steel, with a flag as red as the angry sky behind it, snapping in the wind. To the south of it plunged two long low-lying torpedo-boats, flying the French tri-color, and still farther to the north towered three magnificent hulls of the White Squadron. Vengeance was written on every curve and line, on each straining engine-rod, and on each polished gun-muzzle.

And in front of these, a clumsy fishing-boat rose and fell on each passing wave. Two sailors sat in the stern, holding the rope and tiller, and in the bow, with their backs turned forever toward Opeki, stood two young boys,

their faces lit by the glow of the setting sun and stirred by the sight of the great engines of war plunging past them on their errand of vengeance.

"Stedman," said the elder boy, in an awe-struck whisper, and with a wave of his hand, "we have not lived in vain."